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Editor

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Edited by

HAROLD

GARNET

BLACK

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THE WAY OUT

THE WAY OUT

TWELVE CHRISTIAN LEADERS
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
SPEAK TO A WORLD IN CHAOS

Compiled and Edited by
HAROLD GARNET BLACK



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DEDICATED

to

All Those Choice Souls
Who Actively Seek to Build
The Kingdom of God
on Earth

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PREFACE

To those who look about them with observant eyes, the world today presents an amazing spectacle. In every field of thought there is confusion. In national politics, in international relations, in economic theories, in ideas concerning the nature and function of government itself, in education, in questions of crime and law enforcement, in social and domestic relations, in the field of religion — everywhere there is chaos. Politicians and statesmen, plain citizens in all walks of life, and especially youth look wonderingly into the future. Looming up in front of them they see only a huge question mark.

The world is torn today by dissension and war. Nations have grown suspicious of one another. Dictatorships have sprung up as a challenge to democratic forms of government, and with them has come a resurgence of the old theory that the individual is subservient to the state. Personality as the supreme value has been dethroned. In both Europe and Asia the philosophy of force, the belief that might makes right, which we fondly thought to have been thoroughly discredited, still survives and is being followed today as a national policy.

Everywhere there has been exhibited a great moral sag in both private and public life. Men are bewildered by the passing scene. They have allowed themselves to drift into and to accept a philosophy of life that is materialistic and pagan. They are full of fear. They have lost confidence in themselves, in one another and in God. They feel the foundations crumbling beneath them. They seriously question the old moralities. Their religious faith has been undermined. They seek solid ground on which they may stand.

Today the world is in dire need of leadership. The chaos in which it finds itself in every area of thought and action calls

for an intelligent restudy of life itself, and of its purpose and meaning. Religion ought to have an authoritative word to say in such an hour of crisis. The materialistic philosophy has fallen short. Life must be given a spiritual interpretation. America, indeed the whole world, needs most of all, we believe, to listen to the voice of religion.

Twelve outstanding Christian leaders living in southern California and representing various denominations have been asked to interpret what the Christian religion can do for life as it has to be lived in these perilous times. No restriction has been placed upon what they wish to say. The present symposium expresses the most profound convictions of these religious leaders, and should be of great and permanent value.

HAROLD GARNET BLACK

Beverly Hills, California

THE CONTRIBUTORS

ROY L. SMITH, pastor of the First Methodist Church of Los Angeles since 1932, was named one of the seven most representative Methodist ministers of America in a vote of sixteen thousand Methodist preachers in 1935. He was born at Nickerson, Kansas, in 1887. His father was for many years a local preacher. His mother was a prominent W.C.T.U. worker and a lecturer.

In 1908 Dr. Smith was graduated from Southwestern College with the A.B. degree. Subsequently he was granted other degrees: B.D. from Garrett Biblical Institute and A.M. from Northwestern University in 1915; D.D. from Southwestern College in 1923; LITT.D. from Upper Iowa University in 1927; S.T.D. from the University of Southern California in 1936; D.D. from Chapman College and LL.D. from Samuel Huston College in 1937.

Dr. Smith has had half a dozen pastorates, the longest being at Simpson Methodist Church in Minneapolis from 1919 to 1931. He spent two years on the Wellington Circuit in Kansas, two more in Cimarron, one in St. Paul, and four in St. Paul's Methodist Church, Chicago. As a civic leader in Los Angeles he serves with numerous organizations, both local and nation-wide. He is also a special lecturer at the University of Southern California. He has traveled in Europe, the Holy Land, Africa, the Orient, Mexico and Russia, and is recognized as an authority on international affairs.

Dr. Smith averages almost two public addresses per day, and each week writes about eight thousand words for publication. His writings have appeared in more than three hundred American newspapers. In addition to about a hundred pamphlets and brochures he has published a large number of books, among them *Capturing Crowds*, *Four-Wheel Brakes*, *Winning Ways for Working Churches*, *Suburban Christians*, *Sidewalk Sermons*, and *A Primer of the Spiritual Life*.

JAMES HAMILTON LASH is a son of a Baptist parsonage, his parents being the Rev. John Beal Lash and Nancy Coyle Lash.

He was born in Athens, Ohio, was graduated at Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Michigan, in 1900, took his B.D. degree at Hillsdale Theological Seminary in 1903, and subsequently studied in Union Theological Seminary in New York City. In 1919 his alma mater conferred on him the D.D. degree. He was ordained a minister of the Free Baptist Church in 1901.

His first pastorate was at Wolf Lake, Indiana, to which he was called on the death of his father, whom he succeeded. His second was at the College Church at Winnebago, Minnesota. He came to California in 1905, and some time later served for three years the Congregational Church in Rialto and for nearly ten years the Lake Avenue Congregational Church in Pasadena. Since 1917 he has been the pastor of the Hollywood Congregational Church, Hollywood. During this period his church membership has grown from a small group with no building to an influential congregation comfortably housed in a splendid plant on the boulevard.

Dr. Lash has been active in civic and international affairs and is in constant demand as a speaker on these and other subjects having to do with human welfare. He is a Mason, is affiliated with the Knights of Pythias, and is a charter member of the Hollywood Rotary Club. Dr. Lash has been president and moderator of the Southern California Congregational Conference, and represented his denomination at national and international councils.

ARTHUR BRADEN was born in England in 1881. He is an A.B. of Hiram College, Hiram, Ohio (1903), and was graduated from Auburn Theological Seminary in 1909. Syracuse University granted him his PH.D. degree in 1914. In 1903 he was ordained as a minister of the Disciples of Christ. His first pastorates were at Deerfield, Ohio (1903-5), and at Auburn, New York (1905-9). The following year he was president of Keuka College at Keuka Park, New York.

From 1910 to 1914 he served as pastor of the Central Church of Christ in Syracuse, New York; from 1914 to 1920 he was director of the Kansas University Bible chair. The years 1915-18 found him preaching in DeSota, Kansas. From 1919 to 1922 he was minister of First Christian Church, Kansas City, Missouri, and in 1920

became dean of the Kansas School of Religion at Lawrence. For eight years — 1922 to 1930 — Dr. Braden was president of the California Christian College in Los Angeles (now Chapman College), after which he became president of Transylvania College and the College of the Bible in Lexington, Kentucky. In 1938 he moved back to Los Angeles to become the pastor of the First Christian Church at Eleventh and Hope streets. Dr. Braden is the author of the volume, *Religious Revivals and Their After Effects* (1914).

HENRY KENDALL BOOTH was born on April 19, 1876, at Peru, Illinois. Hamilton College granted him his A.B. degree in 1898 and his A.M. in 1901. In the latter year he took his B.D. in the Chicago Theological Seminary. Both institutions honored him with the D.D. degree, in 1929 and 1918 respectively. In 1901 he was ordained as a Congregational minister in Michigan City, Indiana. Dr. Booth's pastorates have included the following: Michigan City, Indiana, 1901-2; Tucson, Arizona, 1902-4; Sacramento, California, 1904-7; Berkeley, California, 1907-9; and Long Beach, California, where he has been in charge of the First Congregational Church since 1909. In 1920 he served as moderator of the Southern California Congregational Conference, and in 1929 preached the national council sermon at Detroit.

Dr. Booth is a member of the City Charter Commission of Long Beach, a member of the board of education, and a trustee of Pomona College. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Delta Phi and Phi Gamma Mu. He is the author of a number of noted volumes in the field of religion: *Religion of an Evolutionist* (1918), *The Philosophy of Prayer* (1921), *Religion for Today* (1923), *The Background of the Bible* (1928), *The Bridge between the Testaments* (1929), *The World of Jesus* (1933), and *The Great Galilean Returns* (1936). He has also written three biblical stories: "Onesimus, the Slave," "The Song of the Angels," and "Unto Us a Child is Born." Two of his sermons have been published in the *Christian Century Pulpit*.

"Portents on the Social Horizon" is the title of the three Earl lectures Dr. Booth recently gave at the Pacific School of Religion. He has always been especially interested in social Christianity.

FRANK BENJAMIN FAGERBURG was born at Slater, Missouri, on May 30, 1898. He spent most of his life in Bloomington, Illinois, until 1920 when he was graduated from Illinois Wesleyan University. His B.D. degree was taken at Newton Theological Institution (now Andover-Newton Theological School) in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. In 1931 his alma mater honored him with a D.D. degree, as did also the University of Southern California in 1934. Upon his ordination to the Baptist ministry in 1923, he became pastor of the First Baptist Church of Springfield, Massachusetts, one of the largest churches in that state. He remained there for seven years. In 1930, two years after the death of Rev. James A. Francis, D.D., who for fourteen years had been a most successful pastor of the First Baptist Church of Los Angeles, Dr. Fagerburg was called to that important pulpit and has had an inspiring ministry there ever since. The splendid new building at the corner of Eighth and Westmoreland is one of the finest churches in Los Angeles, modern in all its appointments and strategically located.

Dr. Fagerburg is one of the best known and most popular of the younger ministers of Los Angeles. His volume entitled *The Sin of Being Ordinary* was published in 1934. This was followed by *This Questioning Age* in 1936. His latest book is called, *Is This Religion?* (1939).

HERBERT BOOTH SMITH is a son of a Missouri parsonage, his father being the Rev. Joseph Addison Smith, D.D. After receiving his arts degree in 1905 at Washington University, he studied at Princeton, taking his A.M. degree there in 1908 and being graduated from the Princeton Theological Seminary the following year. In 1909 he was ordained as a Presbyterian minister and took the pastorate of North Church, Rochester, New York, where he remained two years. Then followed a four-year pastorate at Knoxville, Tennessee. In 1916 he moved to Los Angeles to take the pulpit of Immanuel Presbyterian Church. The new building on Wilshire boulevard and Berendo avenue which he dedicated in 1929 and of which he is now the pastor cost \$1,250,000 and is the second largest Presbyterian church in the United States.

Dr. Smith has held many important posts in the gift of his denomination. He was at one time president of the Los Angeles

ministerial association and is now a director of the Los Angeles Board of Church Extension. He was moderator of the Presbytery of Union in 1915 and of the Presbytery of Los Angeles in 1928. In 1913 he was a delegate to the Waldensian Synod which met in Italy. He has also been a commissioner to the meetings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church held in St. Louis (1919); Columbus, Ohio, (1925); San Francisco (1927); and Pittsburgh (1931); and he is a member of its Permanent Judicial Commission. Occidental College conferred the D.D. degree upon him in 1918.

Besides lecturing occasionally and being a frequent contributor to church publications, Dr. Smith has four volumes to his credit: *Five Sermons on Democracy* (1918), *The New Earth and Other Sermons* (1920), *Science and Prayer* (1924), and *Beyond the Sunset* (1927).

WILLIAM O. MENDENHALL attended high school in Denver, Colorado. Later he studied at Penn College in Iowa, at Haverford College in Pennsylvania, and at Clark University in Massachusetts. He took his doctorate at the University of Michigan in 1911. The chief subject of his study was mathematics, which he taught for many years, at first in secondary schools. In 1906 he was made an instructor in mathematics at Stanford University; then for ten years he was a professor at Earlham College.

Since then Dr. Mendenhall has been in administrative work, first as president of Friends University in Wichita, Kansas, then as president of Whittier College at Whittier, California, a post he has held since 1934. He was chairman of the National Student Division of the Y.M.C.A. for a number of years. He is a member of the Mathematics Association of America.

CARL SUMNER KNOPF was born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1889 and was graduated from the University of Southern California in 1913. The following year the same university granted him an A.M. degree, and Yale a B.D. degree in 1916. In 1916-17 he was assistant professor of biblical literature at the University of Southern California. For the next three years he was professor of psychology at Fullerton Junior College. From 1920 to 1922 he was

secretary of the San Francisco area of the Methodist Church. Then for a dozen years he returned to his first teaching position, and since 1935 he has been the chairman of his department. In 1929-30 Dr. Knopf was visiting professor of Semitics at Yale. In 1931 he was granted his PH.D. degree at Yale, and he is now dean of the School of Religion at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Dr. Knopf belongs to numerous literary and scientific societies, is a Mason and a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He is one of the most popular lecturers in the field of Bible and Near East archeology. He is a frequent contributor of book reviews and technical articles to periodicals. In 1932 he lectured in England under the Committee on Interchange of Speakers between Great Britain and America. He is the author of *Bible Youth in Modern Times* (1927), *Comrades of the Way* (1928; revised 1936), *The Student Faces Life* (1932), and *The Old Testament Speaks* (1933). His latest book is a little volume called *Ask the Prophets* (1938).

ROY HILTON CAMPBELL was ordained as a Congregational minister in 1910 and has been pastor of the First Congregational Church in San Diego, California, since 1921. Other pastorates have been at Palo Alto, California, 1910-15; Calvary Church, Oakland, California, 1915-17; and Pilgrim Church, Seattle, Washington, 1919-20. Dr. Campbell was director of Pacific coast religious activities Y.M.C.A. huts in the army training camps 1917-19.

He was born on November 19, 1879, in Benicia, California, the son of Alfred Hilton and Emmeline (Burroughs) Campbell. He was educated at Pomona College, Claremont, California (A.B., 1903). The Pacific School of Religion granted him his B.D. degree in 1903 and a D.D. degree in 1924. In 1906 the University of California conferred on him the M.A. degree. On April 9, 1903, he married Mary Elizabeth Burleigh (now deceased).

Dr. Campbell is a feature writer for the *San Diego Evening Tribune*. He is also the author of *Three Vital Questions* (1926) and of a small brochure, *Learning to Live*.

CLEVELAND KLEIHAUER, pastor of the Hollywood-Beverly Christian Church, is a city pastor with a rural background. His early

life was spent on a farm near Johnson, Nebraska. He took his undergraduate work at Cotner College, and his graduate work at the universities of Nebraska and Washington. His original intention was to go on the stage, but finally he chose the ministry as his life work.

After finishing his work at the University of Nebraska in 1912, he went to Seattle as pastor of the University Christian Church, which grew from a membership of a little over one hundred and a church school of sixty-five, to a church of about two thousand members and a church school of a thousand. He remained for twenty-two years as pastor of this church. In 1926 he served on a commission appointed by the Disciples of Christ to make a survey of missionary work in the Orient. The love of the stage has always remained with him and for a number of seasons he cooperated with the University of Washington in its presentation of "The Wayfarer," in which he played the leading role.

In August, 1933, he came to the Beverly Christian Church of Los Angeles, which has since merged with the Hollywood Christian Church, and he is now the pastor of this consolidated group, known as the Hollywood-Beverly Christian Church. In 1937, for one month, he represented the Pacific coast in the national preaching mission in the southern area of the United States. Since coming to Hollywood he has participated for three seasons in the presentation of the "Pilgrimage Play," in which he was cast for the role of Simon Peter.

EARL CRANSTON was born in Denver, Colorado, in 1895 and grew up in that city. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1916, obtained the B.D. degree from Drew Theological Seminary in 1920 and that of M.A. from Columbia University in 1925. From 1924 to 1926 he was a graduate student at Union Theological Seminary. In 1931 he received a PH.D. from Harvard University. During the World War he was first an army Y.M.C.A. secretary in Washington, D. C., and later a driver in the United States army ambulance service in Italy. From 1920 to 1924 and from 1926 to 1928 he engaged in evangelistic and educational work for the Methodist Episcopal mission in Peking, Taianfu and Chengtu, China, including teaching in West China Union University. He

was a member of the National Christian Conference at Shanghai in 1922 and of the Conference on American Relations with China at Baltimore in 1925.

Returning permanently to America in 1928 Dr. Cranston taught at Boston University, at the State Teachers College, Buffalo, New York, and at Colgate University. Since 1934 he has been chairman of history and political science at the University of Redlands, Redlands, California. In 1933 he was an exchange preacher in England and Scotland and a speaker at the Seventh International Congress of Historical Sciences at Warsaw, Poland; in 1937 he traveled and studied in Europe with Sherwood Eddy's American Seminar. In California he has been a speaker at the institutes of world affairs at Riverside and the institutes of international relations at Whittier and Mills colleges and at the Asilomar student conferences. He is a member of the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations. He has written articles and reviews for various periodicals and a book, *Swords or Plowshares?* published in 1937.

ALBERT EDWARD DAY, born in an Ohio town in 1884, traces his ancestry to New England settlers of the early seventeenth century. Taylor University granted him an A.B. degree in 1904, the University of Cincinnati an A.M. in 1916, and Ohio Wesleyan University a D.D. in 1926. Taylor University and Allegheny College have likewise honored him with the D.D. degree. After his ordination to the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church he became pastor at Bellefontaine, Ohio, 1904-6. He served at various churches in the eastern part of the country until 1937. Since then he has been pastor of the First Methodist Church, Pasadena, California.

Dr. Day has served his denomination in many capacities. He is a member of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America and was a delegate to the South American Conference at Montevideo in 1925. For four years he was chairman of the Social Service Commission of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. During the World War he served as chaplain with the American Expeditionary Forces. Dr. Day is recognized as one of the outstanding religious leaders in America. He is a frequent

contributor to religious periodicals, notably the *Methodist Advocate*, *Religion in Life*, the *Methodist Review* and the *Christian Century*. He is the author of *Present Perils in Religion*, *Revitalizing Religion*, *Jesus and Human Personality* (the Lyman Beecher lectures for 1934), and *God in Us; We in God*. Dr. Day has also delivered the Shepard lectures on preaching at Bangor, 1933; the biennial lectures at the Congregational Council, Mount Holyoke, 1936; the Earl lectures at Berkeley, 1937; the Gates lectures at Grinnell, 1938; and the Jones lectures at Emory University, 1939.

THE WAY OUT



THE WORLD IN CHAOS

BY HAROLD GARNET BLACK

Again and again in books and from the public platform have we been reminded that we are living in uncertain and troublous times. The dislocation caused by the World War marked the end of an epoch in modern history. Men and women thereafter suddenly awakened to the fact that they were living in a different world. Old things had passed away; all things had become new.

Rarely if ever before have people been so restive or so uncertain of mind. We are even now in the midst of great changes — political, economic, social, educational and religious. The years since the signing of the treaty of Versailles have witnessed both the rise and overthrow of democracy in Europe and the subsequent emergence of the totalitarian state. The rise of communism in Russia under Stalin, of nazism in Germany under Hitler, and of fascism in Italy under Mussolini has had a devastating effect not only upon organized religion but also upon the basic conception of government, its organization and its general purpose.

Science has released and made available new and terrible powers. The dogs of war have been unleashed in Europe, Africa and the Orient, and no one knows what the end will be. The League of Nations as an instrument for preventing the outbreak of war has proved ineffectual in the presence of great crises. Certain nations have grown brazen and defiant in their reliance on cruel and relentless force rather than on the righteousness of their cause to achieve their objectives. The philosophy of brute force is not dead. It is thoroughly pagan. Yet it is the national philosophy that Germany, Italy and Japan live by.

International agreements no longer have any validity. They are broken at will, so that, as a result, nations have ceased to have faith or confidence in the pledged word of one another. International morality is at its lowest ebb. The thing once called national honor has now no real existence. Satisfactory relations, both individual and national, can be enjoyed, however, only where there is mutual trust. Unfortunately, certain nations keep their treaty obligations only so long as it suits them. The present international situation has forced the United States to face the question of the part she is going to play in world politics. Is she to follow a selfish, isolationist policy? Or is she willing actively to cooperate with other great democracies in maintaining the peace of the world?

Politics is notoriously corrupt in America. The control of our major cities is largely in the hands of venal politicians, whose main purpose in life is to grow wealthy at the expense of the public purse. Evil raises its ugly head on all sides. The gangster, the racketeer, the liquor dealer, the vice lord and the gambler are everywhere in evidence. Laws are not enforced; favoritism is shown; juries fail to convict; justice is defeated; there is a growing disrespect for law and order. All these things present serious problems which America must somehow attempt to solve if she is not to go the way of Babylon and Rome. No one knows how near we may be to *la grande débâcle*.

Unfortunately, our economic machinery has broken down. In the United States, by nature one of the richest countries in the world, we have the amazing spectacle of a country with enormous wealth on the one hand and extreme poverty on the other. In a rich country like America, it should not be necessary for a large proportion of the people to live on sub-subsistence standards. We have learned how to produce agricultural and industrial goods on a gigantic scale but have not discovered how to distribute them equitably. The presence of such manifest inequalities creates social unrest and presents a national

problem that calls for a satisfactory solution. The financial insecurity of men no longer able to be employed gainfully likewise demands intelligent study in order to discover the best means of alleviating their economic distress.

Closely connected with this is the problem of unemployment. This has been attacked by local, state and federal governments with only partial success. Upon the real causes of unemployment even recognized economists themselves do not agree, the fact being that there are numerous causes closely interrelated. Various methods therefore have been suggested and divers devices tried in an effort to relieve the unfortunate situation. Public relief for the many millions involved has necessitated a greatly increased tax burden and made an immense drain upon the public treasury.

Perhaps worse than that is the psychological effect unemployment has had upon those whose idleness was not of their own choosing, because unfortunately a large proportion of the unemployed have developed a dislike for work and have come to feel that it is the government's business to take care of them. Many of them would rather live idly on public relief than support their families by a higher wage earned at regular work. They have suffered a serious character deterioration; they have been robbed of self-respect and personal initiative. Furthermore, flagrant dishonesty on a large scale has crept into the management of the public relief program.

In addition to all this, war between capital and labor and strife within the ranks of labor have marked the last few years. Strikes have been called, the "sit-down" strike has been developed as a new labor weapon, mass picketing has been carried on, industry and transportation have been crippled and sometimes paralyzed, and marked violence with considerable loss of life has taken place. All this has aggravated the general problem of unemployment rather than helped to solve it. Vast numbers of men have indicated no disposition to extricate themselves from their difficulties but only to complicate them

through selfish practices. Many have shown bad judgment in allowing themselves to be misled by radical, self-seeking leaders.

Crime in multiplied forms is everywhere rampant. Gangsters, racketeers, kidnapers and "chiselers" make their appearance in all our major cities. The gambling mania has seized the American people — gambling on the stock market, at the horse races, at theaters on "bank night," and at so-called games of skill which have an especial appeal to youngsters who have only dimes and nickels to spend. Juvenile delinquency is commonplace, partly because of broken homes and partly too because sufficient playgrounds are not provided to furnish an outlet for the bounding physical energy of youth. The publicity given to crimes through the daily press, the murder stories found in the pulp magazines and even in the better ones, the portrayal of criminal acts as part of the plot material of novels, of motion pictures and of not a few radio programs — all these have an unhealthful and demoralizing influence upon the American public but especially upon the minds of youth.

The war against the traffic in alcoholic beverages with all its vicious and corrupting influence upon both the social and the political fabric seemed for some years to have been won; but with the change brought about by the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, it is evident that a new strategy must be devised and developed if America is to be rescued from what, according to the best authorities, she is fast becoming — the most drunken nation in the world.

The brewers and distillers are interested only in how much golden profit they can make from their newly legalized business. The prospect of enormous dividends completely clouds their minds and callouses their feelings regarding the social and moral deterioration their business is bringing about. They show no concern whatever for the terrible debauchery of body and ruination of soul that their traffic inevitably visits upon the

American people. The government at Washington may declare beer to be nonintoxicating but is powerless to change the inherent nature of alcohol. No declaration — not even that of the American Congress — can make alcohol other than it is, a narcotic poison. Washington cannot change the chemistry of this drug nor its physiological effect.

The advertising tactics of the great American tobacco companies in their evident determination to enslave women as well as men is likewise to be deprecated. The conscienceless recruiting of boys and girls into the ranks of habitual drinkers and smokers is a just cause for some sort of national action. These huge corporations are striking at the very heart of the republic — its youth.

The disintegration of the family and its increasing instability as the basic social unit are regarded with growing concern by the forward-looking thinkers of the day. Modern social processes and the increasing economic independence of women through the new business opportunities now open to them have had an explosive effect upon family life. The old-fashioned mother of a generation or two ago, whose duties were chiefly domestic, has almost vanished. Woman has been largely emancipated from the drudgery of household work and rejoices in her new status as wage earner. But this change is having a very serious effect upon family life.

Ideas concerning marriage have changed so markedly in recent years that, instead of being regarded as a solemn covenant, it has become the recognized target of the professional jokester. Because the marriage relationship has been so lightly entered into, marital difficulties are on so rapid an increase that the severance of the marriage tie has become very common. The list of reasons given is alarmingly extensive, many of them being of a most trifling nature. The result is that the divorce mills grind faster and faster every year. Divorce statistics are very disconcerting. This rapid breakdown of the American family as a social unit constitutes one of the major

problems of our day. It represents a vast departure from the traditional and historical point of view.

Worse than any of these things, however, is the fact that men's religious beliefs have been shaken. Men have come to question whether life itself is worth while, and whether it has any meaning or significance. They wonder whether it pays to be honest, whether there are any unshakable foundations upon which a sound and practical philosophy of life can be built. They wonder whether materialism is the real answer to humanity's need or whether there are spiritual values which transcend those of the philosophy of mere things. In Russia, for example, where the great masses of people feel that they have been cruelly and wantonly betrayed by the church, the reaction against organized religion has swung violently to the left, so that their present-day leaders, declaring religion to be only an opiate, preach an out-and-out atheism. Idealism has gone by the board; spiritual values have been discredited; materialism has been enthroned and is worshiped as a god.

The deplorable fact is that this pagan philosophy is spreading rapidly and has found congenial soil not only in Russia but also among certain Latin and Teutonic peoples, notably in Mexico, Italy and Germany. The bitter persecution that has been ruthlessly inflicted upon the Jews of Germany by the nazi leaders because of their implacable hatred for that race is only one phase of it. Just how seriously this pagan philosophy has affected America remains to be seen. Religious leaders feel an increasing concern for the future of civilization itself. Bishop George Craig Stewart of Chicago, for example, in an article in the *Atlantic* sadly laments what he sees with clear-eyed vision everywhere about him — "the resurgent tide of paganism now sweeping the western world, the breakdown of moral standards, the widespread cynicism and secularism which threaten the very soul of the race, the abandonment of worship, the apparent return of the old heathen gods."

Unquestionably the church has fallen upon evil days. Many

prophets of righteousness declare that it is decadent, even moribund, and will never regain its former power and glory and prestige; they believe that it has sealed its own doom. They point out that church attendance is woefully small and rather perfunctory, and that sermons are not vital because they have little relation to life as it is lived in the shop, in the factory or behind the desk. Many sermons lack inspiration, it is true, and all too frequently pulpit utterances have degenerated into formal discourses and pleasing essays upon unimportant subjects or doctrinal themes. Hundreds of preachers lack the prophetic fire of an Isaiah with his "Thus saith the Lord!" In far too many instances the church has not successfully met the opposition given it by secular activities — the theater, radio programs, outdoor sports, Sunday newspapers, and the pleasures of beaches, mountains and the open road.

Men see everywhere about them the results of social injustice and corporate sin, but they have seemingly lost the sense of personal sin and even question the immortality of the soul. They are far removed from Plato in both time and belief concerning the great realities. They cannot quite sense the meaning of Paul's statement that the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal. Their religious faith, if it exists at all, is purely passive, not active. The urgent need of the world's redemption does not grip them vitally so as to drive them by an irresistible compulsion to do something about it personally.

Real hope, however, lies in the fact that man is incurably religious. The presence of so many religious cults and isms is evidence of it. Man is forever haunted by the conviction that there is something that lies beyond the mere material world. What he needs most, therefore, is to explore and use the potentialities that lie at the heart of religion.

The Christian church needs to be revitalized. How is such revitalization to be accomplished? How is the church going to capture the enthusiasm and loyalty of youth and recapture

the interest and active participation of those of maturer years who have grown cold and indifferent? These are crucial questions. The church must present a program and a philosophy, Christ-centered, that will appeal to their idealism and challenge them to their best. A new technique will have to be developed to meet the new problems of the new day.

When is religion vital? This is the answer given by Grace Sloan Overton, chairman of the marriage and home department of the National Council of Federated Church Women, herself one of the foremost public platform speakers in America today. "Religion," said she, "can be said to be alive when it is sensitive to current needs, when it seeks honestly to match God's power with the need of the people, of race and of the world. Religion is decadent when it inanely mouths theological statements and thinks only of using religion as a means of securing one person, or a specialized favored group of people, or one nation. Religion is particularly degenerate when it refuses truth and when it tenaciously hangs onto the past without being open-minded enough to turn the searchlight of new truths upon the old truths and see how they stand up."

Then she asks this pertinent question: "Do Christians have the nerve, do Christians have the insight, do Christians have the intellectual integrity, do Christians have the fundamental faith in an eternal God to grapple with a rapidly changing world and have a message definite and challenging enough to compel the world to listen? "

No truer word was ever uttered than that penned by Woodrow Wilson six months before his death: "The sum of the whole matter is this, that our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually." The Christian theory of life, I believe, is the only one that will bring international peace, drive out poverty and injustice, develop right social and economic relationships, and set up worthy ideals of

human conduct. We cannot escape the fact that Christianity remotivates and empowers life.

Some time ago a friend showed me a photograph that has impressed everyone who has looked at it. His son had taken the picture from an airplane that was flying high above the clouds which blanketed the city of San Francisco that day. Everywhere below could be seen only the billowing clouds of fog and mist that had come in through the Golden Gate and completely covered that western metropolis — everywhere except at one point. Exactly in the center of the photograph there was plainly visible not the top of a church spire but only the cross on the very tip of it. Only the cross! Right in the center!

That picture is symbolic. This poor old world is covered with clouds of doubt and fear, greed and selfishness, hatred and suspicion, poverty and shame, sin and wretchedness. But above those clouds still stands the cross — the only hope of mankind, the central thing in life's picture.

At the present moment, as has already been pointed out, the world is in chaos. It needs a modern Moses to lead it out of its spiritual wilderness and into the Promised Land. It needs to hear the clear voice of religion speaking above the general babel of other voices. What has religion to say in such a day as this? What spiritual leadership can be offered that has any hope in it? What healing balm has Christianity to pour upon this troubled and sin-sick world? What has it to offer to America and the world as a cure for the ailments of society? Is it the panacea needed for this crisis hour? It is to answer these questions that the present volume of sermon-addresses in applied Christianity has been written.

WE FACE A CHANGE

By ROY L. SMITH

Behold, I make all things new. REV. 21:5

The tabernacle of God is with men. REV. 21:3

The whole world is in a state of great uneasiness. It is not merely that millions have lost their sense of economic security, serious as that is, but that they have lost all confidence in life itself. They are not at all sure it can be mastered. They have a vague feeling that it will not turn out well after all. They live in constant fear that it will play some ghastly joke on them. Among the intellectuals there is a growing suspicion that civilization is breaking down, and historians are searching the records of the past to discover what symptoms precede a collapse, to determine if possible what the trends of our times may be.

Moreover, man himself is under grave suspicion. There are those who say that the burden of civilization has grown so heavy that mankind can no longer endure it, that the mechanics of life have become so complicated that the human spirit cannot hold up under the pressure. They cite the case of the machine, invented as a labor saver, which has turned upon its creator and is crushing the life out of him. Man's spirit and mental capacity, according to these prophets of doom, do not equip him to survive the load of the civilization he has produced.

The church suffers and shares in this nervousness, as do all other social institutions. There are those outside its membership who say quite frankly that it has outlived its usefulness. There are those inside its membership who have lost all interest in its activities and services because it does not seem to answer any of the questions they are asking. Through-

out the world there is a war on the God idea. In some countries, such as Russia, Germany, Turkey, and only a little less so in Mexico, the war on religion is a part of the political philosophy of the dominant political party. Even where this condition does not prevail, there is a popular practical atheism in which men live as if God did not exist.

The weakness of the church under these conditions lies in the fact that it does not have any clear-cut or widely accepted understanding of its own mission. Yesterday it knew what it was trying to do, and no one had any doubts or misunderstandings in the matter. The preacher was to preach against sin, and sin was a very simple and individual matter. He was to convert sinners, bring them into membership in the church, and hold them in the path of duty until death provided a release into heaven. The layman and the preacher were in complete agreement, and the layman contributed to the support of the preacher with the comfortable feeling that he was hiring the preacher to convert sinners to the layman's own religious point of view.

But the situation is not nearly so simple as that today. Throughout wide areas of the church there is a marked cleavage between the clergy and the laity, and in some quarters there is almost open war between the clergy and the world outside the church. Industrialists, business men, politicians and some "patriotic" groups look upon the church with grave suspicion that it is "radical." From various sources comes the broad hint that the church stick to "spiritual matters" and leave economics and politics alone. Many preachers are black-listed because of their pulpit utterances on social themes, and the laity is greatly embarrassed because the church is being labeled "red." The critics inside and outside make much of the charge that the church has abandoned its spiritual function and has become political, all of which produces a mood of anxiety and uncertainty in the mind of the layman who furnishes the funds for the future of the church.

One underlying cause of the confusion is the change in religious terminology which has come during the last decade. The Oxford Groups have added new words to our vocabulary, and the psychologists have added others. Some have been borrowed from the advertising fraternity. Sociologists, economists, politicians, and scientists from the laboratories have made their contributions. The net result is that the layman who was trained in the Sunday school of a generation ago, and is familiar with the theological terms then in use, finds himself listening to a strange and foreign tongue when he sits in his pew on Sunday morning. It is not only that the words sound new; they also sound secular. Even worse, he misses the old familiar phrases upon which he was reared. This gives him a sense of uneasiness; he is not quite sure the new vocabulary is really religious, and has a haunting fear that his preacher is not "spiritual."

Even more disturbing is the fact that the preacher is dealing with an entirely new range of themes. Instead of preaching on sanctification, free will, the incarnation, divine grace, the atonement or a "plan of salvation," he may be preaching about the problem of the dispossessed, the exploited, migrant workers from the dust bowl, the totalitarian state, the moral issue in some international situation, or the religious aspects of economic change. Even the phrase "the Kingdom of Heaven," which only yesterday was everywhere assumed to mean life after death, is now used as the title for a new social order here on earth which is, according to the preacher, to be set up by Christian laymen.

To make the whole case worse confounded, we are in the midst of a hysteria of label-pasting. Men are not measured by the worth of their opinions, and their points of view are not judged by their logic or merit. Instead, men are classified by prejudice and according to propaganda, and forever thereafter branded as modernists, fundamentalists, progressives, conservatives, liberals, reactionaries, radicals, Bourbons, or just

plain "reds." The average layman, gathering his religious ideas from his daily newspaper which is published in the interests of his political party, lives in a deadly fear lest his preacher be called "radical" and his church come under the suspicion of the political and commercial leaders of the community.

The modern preacher and the modern layman live in two different thought-worlds. Not ten per cent of the membership of the average Protestant church read any kind of religious newspaper. Not five per cent read a serious religious book by an outstanding religious thinker in the course of an entire year. They are almost completely ignorant of the great tides of thought that are running through the religious world. Less than three per cent of American Protestants attend any meetings or conventions of their churches where the great problems of the church are discussed. The most serious problem of the church with which they are familiar is the problem of local finance. The preachers, on the other hand, support the religious book trade and keep the religious press in existence. Most of the conventions they attend are concerned with the great moral and social issues with which the church is confronted. A large proportion of the books they read deal with some phase of the social, economic or industrial crisis through which the world is passing.

There is a section of the church that seeks a solution for the situation by retreating into the safe seclusion of theology. The fundamentalist preacher assures his congregation that the salvation of the world depends upon a return to "the old-fashioned religion." He sees no hope of any redemption of this world, and waits wistfully for the second coming of the Lord Jesus. In the meantime he brands all efforts to apply the teachings of Jesus to industrial, political or economic issues as "modernism" and charges his brother minister who invades the economic field with the message of Jesus with having repudiated the divinity of Christ.

All this has the effect of leaving the layman in a state of very great confusion. He has not had time or inclination to keep up with the advances of religious thought and in such a situation as ours feels himself being thrust out into a new and uncomfortable world. It is as if he had come home and found a strange family in possession of his own house, with the furniture all changed around. Added to his bewilderment is the vague fear that the preacher, whose financial support he is providing, instead of trying to convert sinners to the layman's theological point of view is in reality trying to convert the layman to the preacher's economic and political point of view. No man enjoys paying for his own conversion.

The first order of business before the Protestant church of today is to come to a clear understanding of its own task and function. It must know where it is going and what it is trying to do. The changed times have altered its whole case, and the changed mood of the world is a challenge it cannot ignore without going down to its doom. To survive, it must rediscover its mission and message.

Our fathers lived in a simple generation. Life may have been hard and stern, but it was not complex. Men worked long hours, but under low pressure. It was easy for men to know what they believed because the issues they faced were intensely personal and clean-cut.

The economic facts of life were simple. The employer worked in the shop with his help. The tradesman and his customers lived on the same street and belonged to the same church. The mortgages on the homes and farms were held by the local banker who belonged to the same lodge with the debtor. If men did not like the conditions under which they were compelled to work in factory or mill, there was always plenty of free land "out west." Bare hands and a willingness to work were about all the capital a young man needed in order to set up a home and rear a family.

The social facts were simple. Life was individualistic; each

man made his own decisions without a thought of interference on the part of a labor union or employers' association, and no one ever dreamed of the government's regimenting his business. Recreational life was free from all commercialism, and little entertainment was organized for profit. Social life had not yet moved out of the homes into hotels and night clubs.

The political facts were simple. Most men voted the party ticket straight (no matter how crooked the candidates), and campaign funds did not mount up into astronomical figures. The candidate went out directly to the people and called them by name. There were no great international alliances with balances of power, and the nations had not yet found it necessary to enter a mad race of armaments. The mechanization of the world had not yet made the possession of economic basics — iron, coal, oil, copper, rubber, cotton — a condition of life and death on the basis of which a great nation would survive or perish. Life was not dependent upon the machine, but upon individual human effort. Youth did not live under the imminent threat of war or at the mercy of dictators insane with jealousy and mad for power.

The religious facts were simple. The line between Christian and non-Christian was clearly drawn. To be a Christian meant that one held to a certain formula. He had accepted a certain intellectual opinion, had gone through a certain spiritual experience which was partly emotional, had joined the church, and was living a life of moral rectitude. Some question might be raised about the mechanics of the spiritual experience — whether obtained through a penitent form, altar, in an inquiry room, by baptism, etc. — but there was a degree of liberality even here. Religious education consisted largely of the memorization of Scripture, and anyone who was good was good enough to teach the Bible to little children. Men were educated for heaven and not for earth. Sin was easily catalogued and the sinner was easily identified because he lived next door to the saint.

The program of the church was simple. It consisted largely of holding services each Sunday "as usual" and of conducting the annual revival meeting each winter. The preacher inveighed against simple sins like attending theaters, dancing and card playing. Occasionally he preached against stealing, which was defined as taking property from a neighbor; or against lying, which was a matter of spreading falsehood against someone known to the liar and the listener. The long-distance thief and the propagandist were unknown persons, and most sins were purely local as well as individualistic. The Bible was "inspired," which meant that the preacher might draw upon it for texts to prove any position he might care to take. There was no great problem of charity, for there was no such thing as modern poverty. All might be under the necessity of living frugally, but there was no widespread destitution and the chasm between rich and poor was comparatively shallow. The missionary movement was simple. It consisted largely of rescuing brands from the burning. There was no thought of the Christian missionary as an evangelist of human rights, civil liberties, social justice or democracy. He was expected to baptize the heathen, teach them to wear European clothing, establish schools in English, and instruct them in Christian theology.

The world of today is almost entirely new. The church is not serving a generation in which piracy, duelling, slavery, smuggling or tea-taxes are the problems uppermost in the minds of the people. This world will not be saved by fighting again the battles that were fought out a generation ago. The church, to survive, must serve this present age; and to do so it must know the difference between this new age and the old days in which it worked out its technique.

The horse and buggy as means of transportation are gone. Homemade bread is almost gone. The old family doctor who gave everybody the same pills for all diseases is gone. The sewing machine is disappearing. Homes are equipped with

electric refrigeration, air conditioning, electric dishwashers, radios, vacuum cleaners, thermostats and two-car garages.

Much of the religious technique so successful a generation ago is just as completely outmoded as the horse and buggy. The mass revival, for instance, except in a few localities, is almost fruitless in today's life. The evangelist and his singer who attracted multitudes only yesterday are on relief today. The Sunday evening service is completely abandoned in many communities. So also are the prayer meeting, family prayers and the praying band.

Religion itself has been marked for the discard by millions of moderns. Labor is almost entirely alienated from the church because it has not found the church interested in its battle for human rights. A large portion of the progressive thinkers in the field of social science ignore the church because they believe it is not interested in the practical problems of the people. Youth in large numbers are entirely indifferent to the church and religion because they have never discovered any vital relationship between religion and life. In one great university on the Pacific coast, thirty per cent of all students enrolled declared they had absolutely no preference for any church or religion. That means stark paganism.

The church of today must preach to a world in which life is extremely complex and intricate. Life is lived under terrific pressure. Men work shorter hours, but with little or no assurance of economic security. A constant fight is necessary in order to maintain the slightest semblance of individual freedom. Every waking moment is spent in a dependence, in one way or another, upon some machine.

There is an entirely new set of moral facts. The hard-swearing, smoking, drinking, sophisticated woman enjoys the spotlight of favorable attention. Fan dancers are welcomed to college chapels. There is a new tolerance toward the drunk, especially among the women who swarm about the cocktail bars. Millions are on the dole and content to stay

there. An epidemic of "chiseling" has swept across the nation. American cities are notoriously misgoverned and our citizenship, except for sporadic efforts at cleanups, is tolerant of corruption.

There is a new set of physical facts. We are living at closer range with one another than ever before. Apartment houses, family hotels and multiple dwellings have altered the whole pattern of family life for vast multitudes. We have eliminated time and distance from our calculations. We fly the continent between sunrise and sundown; we circle the globe in five days; any significant happening in any world capital is known to the world in thirty minutes. Trailers make us at home beside any highway without responsibility to landlord or ballot box.

There is a new set of economic facts. There is much hue and cry against the threat of collectivism in government, but it is already upon us in industry. One great corporation sells the vast majority of American automobiles; another great corporation controls our system of communications; three or four chain stores supply the food for half a state. The entertainment life of the nation, if not of the world, is dominated by a half-dozen great moving picture producers of Hollywood. Chain banks control the credit machinery of the nation, and *Fortune Magazine* says that twenty-three American women control nearly three-quarters of the fluid wealth of the nation, while Ferdinand Lundberg declares that sixty families control the economic destiny of the entire nation. If we seem to be drifting toward political collectivism, it must not be forgotten that we have already achieved a large measure of industrial collectivism.

There is an entirely new set of social facts. We move as masses, not as individuals. The individual is fast losing his identity and significance. Indeed, there is a marked tendency to relieve the individual of all responsibility. The psychologist assures him that he has no control over his life — that his destinies are wrapped up in conditioning, inhibitions, glands and

complexes. The economist assures him that he is not to blame for his woes — that it is the system under which he lives. The sociologist talks about norms, life patterns and personality adjustments. Religion is the one great social influence that insists upon saying, "Thou art the man!" The labor union dominates the working man and the chamber of commerce dominates the employer. The age of the criminal is lowering; broken homes are emptying a stream of "problem cases" into courts and schools. Charity is organized on a vast, impersonal basis, with social workers talking about budgets, cases, rehabilitation, clinics and social trends. As a result of the depression and government administration of relief, we have a vast army of unemployables.

There is an entirely new set of political facts. The love of freedom is on the wane. Only yesterday we thought the battle for democracy had been won, but today democracy stands with its back to the wall while dictators march from triumph to triumph, and the people toss their liberties into the wastebasket with a lighthearted carelessness that makes one's blood run cold. The fate of the small nations, if not of the world, is in the hands of four or five dictators and masters of great nations. National honor has ceased to be, and in its place economic rights and armed forces have been thrust forward. Democracy is in a life-and-death competition with new political philosophies, such as nazism, communism and fascism. The totalitarian state is the great rival of the governments of free peoples. Inside the United States, organized labor has entered politics and holds the balance of power. We still use the names Republican and Democratic, but we actually have a conservative and a liberal political party.

There is a new set of religious facts. During the last twenty-five years, due to the influence of Walter Rauschenbusch, Washington Gladden, Josiah Strong, and a little group of visioned leaders of a generation ago, the Christian ministry has undertaken to invade the social, industrial, economic and

political fields with the message of Jesus. A rediscovery of Jesus' doctrine of the "Kingdom of Heaven" has revealed the fact that no area of life is foreign to Jesus and his message of redemption. The new study of the four Gospels has revealed the fact that Jesus was aiming at the establishment of a new social order in which human personality was the great sacred value, the reign of brotherhood was the goal, love was to be the law, and the God of Jesus was to be the final and supreme authority. Modern scholarship has put an entirely new body of facts within the reach of the preacher and teacher of the Bible. We now know the social and economic forces with which Jesus was contending; we know the unholy alliance of big business, corrupt politics and a subservient priesthood that crucified him. We now know that every one of the Old Testament prophets was the product of an economic crisis, and that their messages were inspired words spoken in times of economic and political stress in the hope of saving the Hebrew nation from disaster.

These new discoveries within the Scriptures have had the effect of arousing the consciences of Christian leaders. They see that we have done fairly well in establishing justice among individuals, but we have not done so well in establishing justice among classes and groups. The Negro, for instance, in large areas of the United States, is living without enjoying the most fundamental civil and economic rights. Labor is discriminated against. There is no great city in America in which all the facts concerning a labor dispute are presented fully and impartially to the public. The average churchman, outside the ranks of labor, knows almost nothing about the real thinking being done by the workers' groups. The American farmer entered the depression nearly ten years before the rest of the nation experienced it, and little was done to remedy the situation.

These new facts — moral, physical, economic, social, political, religious — create an entirely new set of religious prob-

lems with which the church must come to grips. Religion has ceased to be a purely individual or personal matter. It is not enough to convert individuals. Systems under which individuals are compelled to live must also be converted. To convert systems requires that Christian leadership invade the areas of life where those systems operate, and dominate them.

Careful historians agree that we are living at one of the hinges of history when civilization sets off on a new adventure. The present decade, some declare quite boldly, is comparable in its significance to the era of the Industrial Revolution, the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, or the era in which the Roman Empire collapsed. Every other cataclysmic alteration of economic, political or social conditions has produced corresponding changes in the religious life of the people, and it is not surprising that similar changes are in progress today.

Much of the Scriptures is a record of the growing pains of religion as it adjusted itself to these great economic changes. Spiritually minded men, sensing the new problems that arose with each new set of economic and political circumstances, proclaimed the religious message needed for that day and called upon the people to meet the changes with a faith in Jehovah, their nation's God. These messages were always at variance with the generally accepted religious concepts of the day and, as an inevitable consequence, tension and strain developed between prophets and people exactly as they have developed between large sections of the clergy and large sections of the laity today. But as the people were able to make the adjustment, the cause of good religion moved forward.

The first major crisis reported in the Old Testament was the flight of the Hebrew slaves out of Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai. Coming out of the Nile country without national consciousness, economic training or religious experience, they faced a desperate situation in their conflict with the desert. The majestic mind of Moses, under the inspira-

tion of God, provided them with a philosophy of life, a national social and economic system, a racial consciousness and a religion. History records no greater achievement by any mortal than this. At Sinai the people entered into a solemn covenant with Jehovah, the mountain divinity of Sinai, adopting him as their God. Thereafter their life flowed down an entirely new channel.

In the desert the people lived as nomads, with a communal life in which private property played a minor role. All shared the water, the pasture and the shelter of the desert oases with equal rights and privileges. No man was rich or poor unless the clan was rich or poor. There were no competitive divinities in the desert to wean the people away from Jehovah.

When the Hebrews entered the Land of Promise they abandoned their life as nomads and became farmers. Each man owned his own farm and olive grove. Private property became the basis of their economic life, and each man's prosperity became dependent upon his own personal efforts rather than upon the collective effort of the clan. The original inhabitants of the land worshiped local gods, to whom they gave the name "Baal," which were believed to give fertility to the soil and fecundity to the flocks. The Hebrew farmer, finding his crop failing, was under great pressure to offer tribute to Baal in the hope that it would increase his yield per acre. Thus the conflict between Jehovah and Baal is seen to be rooted in economics.

In the period when peace blessed the land and trade developed, the nation passed from the agricultural to the commercial stage and all Israel turned trader. Great fortunes and great poverty developed side by side. Men became important, not because they were sons of Israel but because they had property. The government was administered for the sake of revenue, and became little more than legalized plunder and official pillage. At this point the prophets arose to declare that

no nation could enjoy the favor of Jehovah which did not deal justly with the poor. This precipitated the conflict between the racial god Jehovah, and Jehovah the God of justice and righteousness. Again the people had to make an adjustment in their thinking, and during the process the prophets were considered radicals and disturbers.

When the little nations of Israel and Judah collapsed and the people were carried off into exile, they had to make another adjustment. No god had ever survived the destruction of the state to which he belonged, but in Babylon the Hebrews continued the worship of Jehovah and developed their priesthood, the law, the synagogue and the Sabbath. Here was a clear case of the separation of church and state. But it was accompanied by an epochal alteration in the religious thought of the people.

When Jesus came preaching, the nation was looking forward to a Messiah who would be a political ruler — just, wise and powerful — who would emancipate the people from the tyranny of Rome and relieve them of their tax burden. The hope was almost purely economic and political so far as the common people were concerned. Only a few among them were more spiritually minded, and to them the messianic hope was more moral and spiritual. John the Baptist came preaching a moral reformation as the prelude to the coming of the Messiah, but Jesus emancipated the idea of the Messiah entirely from its political connotations. When he refused to allow the multitudes to make him a king, they deserted him in disgust. He was not the kind of Messiah they were looking for, and they were not able to make the spiritual and intellectual adjustment that was necessary in order to appreciate the type of Messiah he had come to be.

Christianity arose as a sect within Judaism. At first all Christians were expected to conform to the rites and ceremonies of the Jews before they could become members of the Christian church. When Christianity was thrust out of the

Jewish faith, it dropped Jewish rites and ceremonies and emerged as an entirely new religion, adapted to the Gentile world. This transition is the greatest spiritual struggle recorded in the New Testament. It was painful in the extreme, and echoes of the controversy resound through the Book of Acts and the writings of Paul.

Just as men of old were not able to sense the seriousness of the changes through which they were passing, so millions of Christians today do not sense the significance of the changes through which we are passing. They do not understand the shifting of interests and problems; consequently they do not understand the necessity of changing the religious approach to meet the new demands. They offer strenuous objection to any suggestion that the church enlarge its message, charging those who attempt to make the adjustment with spiritual treason. They feel the tension of the times, but their only solution is to return to the "good old days" and the "old-fashioned religion." To many this means little more than a reversion to the old methods and techniques.

The church has long claimed to be the spokesman for God. To fulfill its mission in this day it must speak as God would speak. We know he would not speak about obsolete sins, but about the transgressions of our own day. And those transgressions are no longer strictly personal and individual, but also social and economic. Men are debauched today, not by personal vices alone but by social pressure and economic forces. To redeem life, these social forces and economic pressures must be redeemed. Just as mass pressure produces war, debauchery, despoliation of life and wreckage of spiritual values, so mass pressure must be built up for the defense of human personality, principles of justice, international peace and character resources. It is not enough to convert individuals to a personal allegiance to Christ; individuals must be trained and inspired to create these mass pressures in behalf of righteousness.

Most modern Christians are accustomed to think of spirituality in terms of mysticism, personal devotions, religious phraseology, otherworldliness and theology. But spirituality must be thought of in terms much larger than these if religion is to redeem our new world. Genuine spirituality includes courage, devotion to ideals, trust in righteous principles, loyalty to truth, respect for human personality, the enthronement of the ideal over the material, justice between individuals and groups, faith in the friendliness of the universe, good will and peace between all peoples, and a reliance upon God rather than upon any form of force. If life is to be redeemed all of life must be spiritualized.

Just because modern life is so completely dominated by economic facts and forces, economics must be spiritualized. How a man earns his money and how he spends it are distinctly spiritual matters. It is a poor religion that will insist upon a man's going to his prayer closet to seek power for his day, and then allow him to go down to his office and invest his money in a business that is drawing its profits from sweated labor. Dr. Halford E. Luccock says: "Jesus was not crucified because he said 'Consider the lilies how they grow,' but because he said 'Consider the thieves how they steal.'" No church is contributing its best to the salvation of this world which is not contributing something to the spiritualizing of the economic life of the people, for it is economic forces that are robbing and plundering humanity along the Jericho road.

Between religion and sociology there is a close relationship which is distinctly spiritual. Consider the large number of personal decisions made under social pressure. The clothes we wear, the entertainment we patronize, the books we read, the political opinions we hold, the houses we live in, the candidates we vote for, the parks we visit, the restaurants we eat in — all these are determined in large part by the mob mind. It is impossible for any person to live absolutely independently. Tens of thousands of men drink alcoholic beverages

because of social pressure. Most women smokers are smokers because of social pressure. No gospel is a "full gospel" which does not undertake to spiritualize the social forces which submerge men in sin.

Politics must be spiritualized. The preacher is advised on every side to keep out of politics; and if politics is only a matter of choosing between two reputable men who stand for the same general principles, the advice may well be heeded. But if we think of politics as the means by which social and economic conditions are to be altered and improved, and as such a supreme opportunity for citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven to express themselves, then the preacher cannot hold himself aloof from politics and keep faith with his calling. In this attitude the preacher has plenty of scriptural precedent, for the Old Testament prophets were, in every case, politicians. They had little to say about the purely personal or individualistic aspect of spirituality. Not one of them preached about a personal religious experience such as conversion, sanctification, guidance or regeneration. They gave no attention to life after death. These things are of great importance, of course, and are entitled to a share of every preacher's attention. But when the people were being exploited, when the ancient heritages were being expropriated, when the poor were being trodden under foot, and when the nation was being betrayed by a prodigal and conscienceless aristocracy, the prophets reached their greatest spiritual heights in their demands for justice. The modern minister may well study their example.

The essential message of Christianity is Jesus Christ. He is not an economic theory, a social fact, a theological opinion, a philosophical abstraction, nor a psychological phenomenon. He is a life. He said, "I have come that ye might have life." All too long we have put him into stained-glass windows in great cathedrals and have not allowed him to walk the streets with hard-pressed man. We have entombed him in theology

instead of liberating him and allowing him to attend political conventions, labor union meetings, trade conferences, international parleys, fiestas, world premières and county fairs. It is the business of the church to summon all of life before him for judgment. This it cannot do if it holds aloof from life as it is lived down on the streets.

The church needs to rediscover Jesus. It will find him where men are earning their daily bread. It will find him where brave men are fighting political corruption, where courageous men are standing alone in legislative halls or city councils in behalf of justice and righteousness, where social workers are laboring to redeem "black areas" amid the city's slums, where employers are endeavoring to compete with sweatshops and still pay their help a decent wage, where public officials are doing their duty against heavy odds, and where teachers in their classrooms are facing facts unafraid.

We hear much about the "second coming of Christ," but the church of today needs to preach the fact that Jesus is already here. He is here crusading for justice, breaking down walls of prejudice between racial and economic groups, putting the force of his mighty personality back of truth, working for righteousness and proclaiming the fact that God is in control. He is in every effort to put right in the place of wrong. He is wherever men are trying to lift the load of woe under which the race staggers.

When Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him take up his cross," he was not talking about a comfortable pew in church on Sunday morning. He was not referring to routine rites and ceremonies by which men think they become religious. He was talking about a struggle that might make it necessary for men to sacrifice their all, including economic advantages and social prestige. He is calling for us, today, to follow him into economic and political battlefields, not into rose gardens or into lives of bliss beyond the skies.

Millions of men are suffering from injustices today which could be lifted off their shoulders if Christians would make the sacrifices and exhibit the courage necessary. Millions of youth, trained and eager, face doors of opportunity that are barred and locked against them. Rich fruits of God's good earth are being wasted or destroyed within sight of the hungry and needy. The world is full of underdogs. Can the church of Christ keep faith with her Lord and accept such a world without protest?

The preacher is advised to preach against sin. Shall he preach against sinful individuals and ignore the sins of systems? Can he ask God's blessing on that hour he spends in his pulpit in which he never raises his voice against the political movements that threaten to engulf the world in another war, or against the social and economic forces that are debauching and impoverishing life for millions of youth?

Let the church move up into the line of battle in behalf of justice for minorities, justice for the workers, justice for the inarticulate and helpless. Let it lend its mighty influence to the fight against political corruption in high places; let it raise its voice in defense of the exploited; let it stand in stubborn opposition against all the forces that would despoil life; let it wage unrelenting war on all those sinful systems that leave men helpless and hopeless.

Occasionally someone exhorts the church to "get back to Christ." This is to miss the matter entirely. Christ is not behind us. He is ahead of us. Our move must be forward to him. He is out in front where the fight for justice is on; he is out where men are risking their lives for the sake of a better world. He is calling to the world, saying, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men. Come up, then, to the help of the Lord."

A RELIGION FOR TODAY

BY JAMES HAMILTON LASH

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

MARK 12:30-31

The most important factor in the life of the individual and of the race is the religious. It first made itself felt far back along the trail of the ages, when some creature emerging from a lower to a higher stratum had the faintest consciousness of right and wrong, and felt the urge to do the right and avoid the wrong. It has continued down to the latest evolved man of the present, gifted, educated, cultured, scientific with all that civilization can give to him. For humanity in the present contains types as dissimilar as these two, with all the countless others in between, embracing those of every grade of intelligence, education, culture and achievement.

The tendency of men to externalize, to institutionalize their thought, resulted in many religions. Some came into being, lived for a time, served their purpose and went the way of all the earth. In one of his books Dr. Hume states there are eleven living religions today. But here is an arresting fact. All religions have to do with the same fundamental verities — God, man, others and their relationships. Christianity is one of these eleven living religions. It had its origin nineteen hundred years ago when Jesus of Nazareth walked out of the obscurity of his home town of Nazareth into the white glare of the publicity of his time and of all the centuries since.

This tendency of humanity to externalize its thought resulted in Jesus' religion's becoming the institution of the

Roman Catholic Church which with all its various orders seeks to make a place for persons of every type of thought and temperament within its fold. Because of this same tendency, in time there came into being Protestantism with its two or three hundred and fifty-seven varieties of denominations, sects and isms. The chief difference between religions, orders, denominations, sects and isms is a difference of thought about God, man or others, or a difference of emphasis or lack of emphasis upon one or the other of these fundamentals, or a different interpretation as to attitudes, methods, ways, means of attaining the desired end.

There is a statement in Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship* which reads as follows: "The chief fact about any man is his religion. What is his religion? The church creed which he asserts? Not this alone, in many cases not this at all; but the thing he really believes, often without asserting it to himself, much less to others. The thing he really believes about the world and life and his own duty and destiny! That is his religion. That is the chief fact with regard to him, for it is this which determines all else." So says Carlyle.

Fundamental to all this in man's religion is God. This is said with some knowledge of the fact that there are those in our day, who think they are wise, who tell us there is no God. This pronouncement is made, not solely by the man in the street, but by some of those who occupy prominent chairs in our leading colleges and universities. They take the position that in a mechanistic universe there is no place for God. According to them the discoveries of modern science make unnecessary the belief in the existence of God. But it is just as true today as when Voltaire said it one hundred and fifty years ago that if God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him.

In a recent magazine article Dr. Millikan of the California Institute of Technology writes: "It seems to me that everyone who reflects at all believes in one way or another in God.

To me it is unthinkable that a real atheist should exist at all. It seems as obvious as breathing that every man who is sufficiently in his senses to recognize his own inability to comprehend the problem of existence, to understand whence he himself came and whither he is going, must in the very admission of that ignorance and finiteness recognize the existence of a something, a power, a being in whom and because of whom he himself lives and moves and has his being." When such a modern-day scientist as Millikan, together with others in his class, delving into the very innermost recesses of this universe, predicates everything on the existence of God, the mumblings of pseudo-scientists in university chairs need not greatly disturb us.

There are certain apparently indisputable facts in our own lives and in the universe about us which fairly compel consideration of a something or a Someone above and beyond the human. This means, as Dr. Millikan has stated, at least the recognition of the existence of a something, a power, a being outside us, concerning whom we need not remain long in complete ignorance. It has been said that our modern scientists have demonstrated that all things work, which indicates power, and that all things work together, which indicates mind. As we look about us in nature and life, everywhere we see evidences of infinite intelligence and supreme power. One visit to the Planetarium in Griffith Park, with even a faint conception of the magnitude and marvels of the universe there revealed, is enough to convince the most skeptical that there are mind and power in the universe.

But something more is essential. A God of mind and power alone might be arbitrary, cruel, despotic, terrible. In fact that is what some persons say about God. The majority of those who come to us ministers with questions about God are not much concerned as to whether or not he has mind and power. The things they want to know from us are, Is the universe friendly? Is God good? Does God care? It has been my

experience that very few are greatly disturbed about God when the tides of life are running full and strong for them, when everything is well with them. But there are times in the life of every person when he or she is driven back of everything superficial and nonessential to the realities. And when this time comes, the logic of life and the necessities incident to its very existence compel not only belief in God, but in addition the hope that he is the kind of God revealed by Jesus, a God with the heart of a father.

This is illustrative: Something over a generation ago, Robert G. Ingersoll went up and down this land making light of some things in religion. Ingersoll frankly said he was an agnostic in religion, that he didn't know. But one day he stood beside the casket containing the form of his loved brother, and in that hour did for his brother what the brother had promised to do for him should he survive. He spoke the last words over his mortal remains. That funeral oration is among the classics of English prose. Among other things he said this: "In the night of death, hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing. He who sleeps here, when dying, mistaking the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with his latest breath, 'I am better now.' Let us believe," said Ingersoll, "in spite of doubts and dogmas, tears and fears, that these dear words are true of all the countless dead."

Thus man seems instinctively to believe in the goodness, love and care of the Creator and Preserver of the universe. Rare indeed is the person in whose experience there is not something pointing to the existence of a Supreme Being.

But simply to believe in God's existence may or may not mean very much, if anything, of value. Even some who believe in God fear him, hate him, disobey him, are antagonistic to him, try to run away from him. Doubtless most persons at some time, in some degree, have adopted these tactics. Those of us who have can testify to their futility. One basic

purpose of all true religion is the establishing and maintaining of right relationships with God. This is as necessary for the most gifted, brilliant, scientific modern as it was necessary for the most ignorant, backward ancient.

Jesus gave the norm for the Christian religion, an ideal, a standard so true, so essential as to make it the element of a universal religion: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." That means the right attitude toward God, obedience to him, the purpose to be like him, fellowship with him. Everywhere are persons who could testify that the times when they sought to have the right attitude toward God, when they were obedient to him and had the purpose to be like him, were the times of keenest satisfaction, highest spiritual exaltation and greatest power.

But the recognition and acceptance of the fact of God and fellowship with him are not enough. One cannot have a genuine religious experience in a vacuum, nor can it be limited solely to the individual and God. We live in a world of human beings. There are others to be taken into consideration. No one's religious experience is rounded and complete unless it includes, in addition to the right attitude toward God, a recognition and acceptance of the fact of others and right relationships with them. The religious experience of many an ancient and modern has gone on the rocks, proved utterly futile, because of an attempt to confine it to an experience of God alone, with no regard for others. We wonder sometimes why the coming of the Kingdom of God on the earth is so slow, why it is so long delayed. The answer, in part at least, can be found in the number of professed followers of the Master who have had a one-sided, partial, incomplete conception of his message and purpose. There are still many persons who think they can have a religion of value with God alone, without any regard for others. The teaching of Jesus relative to one's attitude toward others is as explicit and defi-

nite as it is concerning one's attitude toward God: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

But many today in spite of the clear teaching of Jesus and the experience of the centuries are still asking the question the scribe asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" There ought to be no question in the mind of anyone who catches the spirit and purpose of Jesus as set forth in the announcement he made that day in the beginning of his ministry in the synagogue in Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Were the Master here in person, I am sure his first and major concern would be for those of whom he spoke at that time — the poor, the neglected, the unfortunate, the sick, the destitute, the imprisoned. These all he would designate as neighbors. He would have us so think of them and act accordingly, not only for their sakes but for the sake of ourselves and of the social order of which we are a part.

It is a terribly tragic thing that in rich America today there should be any who are poor, destitute, unemployed, with all the consequences resulting from these conditions. But even more tragic is the fact that with all our intelligence, our skill, our material resources, with so many things for the well-being, comfort, education, spiritual development of our people, we should be so stupid, so careless or so selfish as to have allowed this condition to develop, or that we should permit it to continue. We have not been playing square with God or with others, else this would not be. For we have the intelligence, we have the resources, we have the power. We can have the Kingdom of God here in this land of ours when we want it — that is, when we want it enough to act in the Christlike manner that will usher it in. One of our modern poets has said:

“God, what a world, if men in street and mart
Felt the same kinship of the human heart
Which makes them, in the face of fire and flood,
Rise to the meaning of true brotherhood.”

But how is this ideal situation to be brought about? In the first place, by the use of our intelligence. There has ever been and still is a rather strange anomaly with respect to the intellectual attitude toward religion, in that some conceive of it in terms of intellect alone. On the one hand, as this conception works out in actual practice the result is supposed to be this, that by the intellectual acceptance of a certain creed or formulated statement one comes into a genuine religious experience. The church, both Catholic and Protestant, through the centuries has adopted and followed this method. Those in authority in the church did the thinking for the people. During much of its history it was considered heretical for a layman to think for himself, especially if he reached conclusions different from those at which the ecclesiastics had arrived. It was the duty of the laity to accept what had been formulated for them. Heresy trials in our Protestant churches, a Scopes trial in Tennessee not so long ago, remind us that not only Catholics but Protestants also have adhered to this method.

On the other hand, a blind acceptance presupposes that intelligence not only has nothing to do with religion, but in addition that, if given any place, its results will be detrimental. There is nothing in the teaching of Jesus and no warrant in Scripture for any such conclusion. Intelligence is as essential a requirement for religion as it is for psychology or philosophy, astronomy or anthropology, banking or any other business. It is perfectly evident that until we bring to bear upon the problems of religion greater intelligence, we shall not solve them.

But man is more than an intellectual machine. He has an-

other side than the intellectual to his nature. I fear some of us overlook or forget the fact that God gave man a heart as well as a brain, that man can feel as well as think, that he has an emotional nature as well as an intellectual one. Right here, in my judgment, is a very great source of failure for some of us who essay to be modern and liberal. We are afraid of the emotional, we avoid any expression of it as the devil does holy water. We squeeze all the juice, so to speak, out of our religion, and the residue is as dry as the proverbial dust. The simple facts are that a vastly greater number come into a religious experience through the emotional than through the intellectual channel.

“The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

“The mind has a thousand eyes
And the heart but one,
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.”

All this is basic in what is back of the statement that character is caught, not taught.

Think if you will of the source, the beginnings of your own religious life. With many of us, it was in the days of our childhood, more often than otherwise in a Christian home with a godly father and a beautiful mother. When I trace my own religious experience to its source, it is to such a home, a realm where I am sure the emotional was much more potent through its persuasive power than the intellectual by its drive. I can remember scarcely a word my parents ever spoke to me, but I shall not forget what they were to me, nor can I get away from that memory as long as I live. I am in the Christian ministry because of them. Of the six boys in our family, for

some reason from the time I was a mere lad I was chosen by my father and mother to follow in my father's footsteps in the Christian ministry. They never pressed the subject, never tried to persuade me, but by beautiful lives about which there was a contagion of goodness, a fragrance of the divine, they threw around me and kept around me an influence which one day led to the decision on my part upon which they had set their hearts years before.

Who is there who would dare to say in the face of life's richest experiences and highest ends that heart is not as normal as mind? Heart had perhaps more to do than mind with Tennyson's finding God and pointing the way for others as evidenced by what he said:

"Speak to Him, thou, for He hears,
And spirit with spirit may meet;
Closer is He than breathing
And nearer than hands and feet."

It is in this realm that the Christ exercises in large measure his marvelous sway. This is said with some knowledge of his wonderful teachings, which reveal brilliant intellectual equipment. But the reverence, adoration, devotion, imitation of millions cannot be explained by the brilliance of his intellect. Rather it is found in the greatness of his heart. I grant there is a mystery, which I do not expect ever will be dissolved, at least in my lifetime, about the Christ and his influence and power over the lives of earth's people. It is so marked and so great that we call him the Savior. If he is the Savior, how does he save? We talk about salvation. What is the meaning of salvation as we use the term?

I do not know that I have the answer to the question, but it is my conviction that somewhere in this realm we shall reach the end of the quest. It is admittedly a poor analogy, but most of us know it is very difficult to describe in detail life's deepest

emotions and greatest experiences. But I am persuaded that in something of the same way that my godly father and sainted mother influenced me, molded me, saved me to the ideal of life they had for me, so does the Christ of God save men for the ideal of life he has for them. As I saw the beauty of their lives, the loveliness of their characters, their obedience to the highest, their spirit of sacrifice for me, expressed in a thousand ways, I not only loved them but was moved to try to be like them. I make no pretension of understanding or explaining the transforming power of the Christ, but contemplating his goodness, seeking to imitate his spirit, striving to be obedient to his teachings, appreciate his sacrifice and live his kind of life does something to me, influences me, molds me, saves me to that kind of life.

Mechanical theories of the atonement leave me cold. They have no value for me whatever. But there is a conception of the sacrifice of Christ that does have meaning and vitality and worth, because I know something in the realm of human life that seems to me of a somewhat similar character. There is a scarlet thread running through all history, and nowhere has there been any real progress in that which makes for the great in human life where this thread is not found. Every child born into this world caused pain and care to some mother; every reform that has done its work in the onward sweep of the race has been made at the cost of suffering and sacrifice on the part of many; everything in this old world worth anything cost somebody something. And what is still further to the point, more often than otherwise, the cost was greater to others than to the one receiving the benefit.

“ A picket frozen on duty,
A mother starved for her brood,
Socrates drinking the hemlock,
And Jesus on the rood,

And millions who, humble and nameless,
The straight, hard pathway trod —
Some call it consecration,
And others call it God."

I do not know why God created his universe with the imperative of the operation of such a principle for the development of the great in human character. But I do know that this love principle, love to God and love to others, has been basic in everything which has made for the uplift of the race toward God. Like many others, I have been on the receiving and also on the giving side of this principle. What my parents did for me, in some degree I have tried to do for my child. And because of that experience I think I understand better than ever before the imperative, the greatness of Christ's love for the world — why he would give his life for others. There is not a true parent anywhere who, if called upon to save the life of his or her child, would not gladly pay the price, if need be, with life itself.

It was this principle that was expressed by Nathan Hale, that young soldier in Washington's army, who, when facing the inevitable on that cool gray morning, said, "I regret I have but one life to give for my country." Horace Tracy Pitkin was actuated by this same motive during the Boxer uprising in China. When he realized that he was trapped and that the end of life for him was at hand, he wrote a letter to Mrs. Pitkin in America to the effect that it was his wish, when little Horace was twenty-five, he should come out to China and take up the work his father was compelled to lay down. Lincoln exemplified this principle in his martyrdom. Secretary Stanton sensed this at the death of the Great Emancipator, as evidenced by his statement, "Now he belongs to the ages." The years are witness to the truth of what he said. It is for the same reason that Christ on the cross has universal and eternal significance.

It is not difficult to see the validity of this principle when revealed in the heroic, spectacular and crucial experiences of life. These all have their place and needs must be. The race is infinitely richer because of the deeds of her known great. But love as a redeeming principle is by no means confined to these. In fact, its wider and most telling expression is revealed in common human ways in every sphere of life. Perhaps the most familiar one is in homes where love to God and love for one another are the accepted and ordered practice. It is this which makes home a little bit of paradise here below, and nothing else will so make it. Love in action in the good homes of earth may not be news, but it is life's redeeming element.

This principle operative in our communal life gives to it whatever validity and stability it possesses. There are many things on the surface of our modern life which indicate that men think valuable ends may be attained by means other than the practice of the Golden Rule. Were one to judge by certain attitudes in our industrial sphere, it might seem that force, on the one hand in the form of powerful combinations of capital, or on the other hand in the form of boycotts and strikes on the part of labor, will solve the problems of industry. We know better. The end of industrial strife will come only when employers and employees approach and settle their differences on the basis of understanding, good will and co-operation. The conquest of weaker nations by strong ones has been the accepted rule through the centuries of history. There are still some nations which evidently have not learned the futility of this method, as witnessed by Italy in Ethiopia and Japan in China. Few if any nations are guiltless in this respect. Were any commentary needed as to whether or not force on a vast scale has value, we have it in the aftermath of the World War. It blighted everything it touched. Its destroying influence was on everything with which it came in contact. It damned indiscriminately, for war defeats the victors as well as the vanquished. No nation is victorious in

modern warfare. The representatives of supposedly victorious nations who gathered at Versailles and affixed their signatures to an unjust peace have long since learned how futile it all was.

There is a better way, the way of the Master, the way of understanding, good will, cooperation. This works in the wider spheres of life as well as in the more limited ones. The Golden Rule in industry as practiced by many firms attests its validity and practical utility. Recall the experience of the Quakers under William Penn in their dealings with the American Indians. The Quakers were about the only ones to treat the Indians in the Christlike way and the sole ones to have no difficulty with them.

The magnanimous act of the United States in returning to China the indemnity in the Boxer rebellion produced beneficent results of infinite value. For seventy years Chile and Argentina had been engaged in a bitter quarrel over the boundary line, and at times war seemed imminent. Finally representatives of the two nations decided there must be a better way, the way of the Christ, and signed a treaty to that effect. Then high up in the Andes mountains on the border between the two countries a statue of the Christ was erected and unveiled where it can be seen by the people of both nations. On a tablet at the base are these words: "Sooner shall these mountains crumble into dust than Argentines and Chileans break the peace to which they have pledged themselves at the feet of Christ the Redeemer." That attitude by all nations would end war forever on the earth. The long boundary line between Canada and the United States, without a fort, without a gun, without a soldier to guard it, with nothing but the spirit of understanding, good will, cooperation to defend it, has been worth more than all the forts that could have been erected and all the armies that could have been assembled by the two nations on their frontiers.

Love to God and love to man, when universal and perma-

nent, will have ushered in the golden age. Nothing else will ever usher in this much-to-be-desired consummation. Was it not a most daring, challenging thing on the part of the Christ of God to set for himself this monumental undertaking? He called it the Kingdom of God on the earth. He talked about it familiarly, confidently. He taught his disciples to pray for it. When he went away, he committed its completion to their hands and the hands of those who should come after them. We are in the line of succession. We are to usher in the Kingdom of God on the earth in our time. This is a colossal task. Our own California poet, Edwin Markham, in his incisive way presents the challenge, the method by which it may be met and the glory of the achievement:

“ We men of earth have here the stuff
Of Paradise — we have enough!
We need no other stones to build
The stairs into the unfulfilled —
No other ivory for the doors,
No other marble for the floors,
No other cedar for the beam
And dome of man’s immortal dream.
Here on the paths of everyday,
Here on the common human way
Is all the busy gods would take
To build a heaven, to mold and make
New Edens. Ours the task sublime
To build eternity in time! ”

May we accept the challenge, adopt the method, and share in the glorious achievement.

THREE MODERN BIDDERS FOR HUMAN ALLEGIANCE

BY ARTHUR BRADEN

*Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt
thou serve.*

MATT. 4: 10

Today is not the first time in human history, nor perhaps will it be the last, when humanity has stood at the crossroads of life debating which way to turn. Mankind stood there in the fifth century, in the declining days of the Roman Empire. Then was decided whether mankind should longer suffer the tyranny that was Rome, or whether this tyranny should be destroyed and man should be free. Humanity chose the road of liberty, and the Roman Empire fell. Again in the Middle Ages mankind stood at the fork of life's highway: should the feudal lords be continued in power, reducing men, women and children to a common serfdom and sacrificing them on the battlefields of feudal jealousies, or should men build nations for their own protection and power? The sons of men chose the latter alternative and the modern nations were born.

In the sixteenth century once more humanity stood at the parting of the ways and had to choose whether to travel the road of freedom of religion and conscience or be driven down the shadowed ways of religious despotism. Martin Luther chose the shining highway of religious freedom, and millions have followed in that way from his day until now. The same was true in our American Revolution and in the French Revolution: mankind stood at the crossroads and chose the path in which coming generations were destined to follow.

Now once more in the twentieth century we stand at the fork of the road. The only difference between the present and past situations is this: today, the road before us branches in three directions, and in each road stands a bidder, pleading

for the allegiance of all mankind. Each bidder is striving for world domination, and these three bidders are mutually exclusive. Only one can win. There can be no compromise. The one that wins the allegiance of mankind is bound to eliminate the other two. Thus an irrepressible conflict is in progress. It cannot be avoided or escaped; humanity must make its choice among these three modern competitors for human allegiance.

The first of these is Karl Marx and modern communism. Karl Marx was a German Jew who was exiled from Germany because of his radical teachings on social questions. In England, in the year 1867, he published a book written in the German language and entitled *Das Kapital*. This volume, little noticed at the time of its publication, was nevertheless destined to exercise a greater influence upon the social and political thinking of mankind than any other book written in the last two hundred years.

Das Kapital expounds the politico-economic theory of modern communism. Briefly stated, its argument is rooted in the doctrine of absolute economic determinism and involves the destruction of the capitalistic system as we know it and the substitution for it of a purely materialistic system known as communism. This is to be done by means of violent revolution and bloodshed and is to be made permanent by the imposition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Last, and by no means least, in this process is the liquidation of religion along with the owning class, because, according to its theory, religion is an opiate, an anaesthetic, designed to benumb the masses while the classes bleed and exploit them. When all this shall have been done, all the means of production and distribution will be in the hands of the workers, everybody will be well fed, well housed and well clothed, and the millennium will have been brought about.

Marxism is not national or racial, but rather international and interracial in both scope and aim. Its field of operation

is the whole world. In this particular it is like the Christian religion. Marxists propagate their dogma with fanatical religious zeal. To them it is not only a religion, but indeed the only religion that matters.

Incidentally, we must pause here to say that there is nothing wrong with communism as a system of sharing. Idealistic communism has been advocated and practiced since the dawn of history. Many races and nations, in one form or another have had little groups of men and women who lived in the communistic way. Plato and other Greek philosophers advocated it as the ideal system of living. Communism appeared in the New Testament church at Jerusalem shortly after the day of Pentecost. This system of having all things common was devised, however, to meet an economic emergency that existed at the time. When that emergency disappeared, the Jerusalem communism also disappeared with it. It was both voluntary and temporary. Men and women joining the Christian church — particularly those who came from the Jewish communities — found themselves without friends or funds and with their relatives hostile. Something had to be done and done immediately. The communistic arrangement was the answer; and, so far as we know, while its life was apparently brief, nevertheless as a stop-gap it was a success. It is worth while pointing out that Ananias and Sapphira were condemned, not because they failed to enter the system or refused to share, but because they lied regarding the amount they contributed. Since then, down through the centuries, there have been many communistic groups, some under the auspices of the church and some quite independent of it.

The common denominator in all these efforts is an attempt to solve the problem of the unequal distribution of the world's goods by sharing equally with others in the group. Now, there is nothing wrong with this. Indeed there is much to commend in it, particularly as a device to meet and overcome

some great, pressing economic maladjustment such as occurred among the Jews at Jerusalem following Pentecost. In great catastrophes such as floods, earthquakes and war, communism always tends to become the order of the dark day, but it passes with the clearing of the economic weather.

It should be understood at the very outset, however, that modern communism is something radically different from this. What Karl Marx teaches in *Das Kapital* is objectified in modern Russia — a society built upon the foundation of cold, stark materialism and blatantly denying and ridiculing all spiritual and religious values. As previously indicated, modern Marxism is rooted fundamentally in one underlying dogma, namely, economic determinism. When one understands what the Marxist means by this phrase, one holds the key to the understanding of this materialistic system. By economic determinism is meant that everything in life is absolutely determined by the materialistic situation that is involved. There is only one explanation of history, say the communists, and that is the economic explanation. Art, education, and of course commerce and even religion, they claim, are likewise economically determined. Jesus says, "Man shall not live by bread alone"; Karl Marx says, "Man shall live by bread alone." We can take our choice. According to Marx, nothing other than the material situation counts or is important, and one who knows the economic facts in any given situation knows all that is worth knowing.

No one but a fool would argue that the economics in any given situation is negligible or unimportant. In fact, everything in life is more or less conditioned by the surrounding economic situation. It is impossible to divorce the material and the economic from any phase of our modern, many-sided life. But that is a very different thing from saying that the one fundamental and determining factor in all life is the material, for this is not true to human experience, either for the individual or for the group. As a college executive for

twenty-five years, I can confidently testify that the success of young men and women, either as students or later as servants in life, cannot be measured or predicted by the size of their bank accounts. Indeed, every college executive well knows that the thing operates very frequently in reverse; the best students and those who later on make the greatest contributions in life come frequently from the underprivileged groups, who have little or no economic advantage.

On the basis of economic determinism one would be hard put to it to explain the usefulness of W. E. Gladstone to England, Benjamin Franklin to the colonists, Abraham Lincoln to America, or Stanley Jones to the world. Furthermore, it would be equally impossible to explain to the world of its day the transforming power of that poverty-stricken apostolic church, or the vast contribution to our country of the Pilgrim Fathers who, though bereft of material possessions and bereaved during the first year on this soil of one-half their number, nevertheless bequeathed to this country the Christian home, the Christian school, the Christian church and democratic government. The Pilgrim Fathers were able to do that, not because of what they had in their hands, which though they had been filled with diamonds and pearls would under the circumstances have availed little. Rather was it what the Pilgrim Fathers were and what they purposed in their hearts that made the difference. These men were not economically determined, but rather soul guided and determined.

Added to the fundamental fallacy of economic determinism, the Marxists advocate class hatred, violent and bloody revolution and absolute atheism in their system of philosophy. Their slogan is "Hate your oppressor," the oppressor in this case being the owning class. Attempts at understanding and reconciliation are discouraged. The final objective is the absolute liquidation of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat. "Turn the international war into a class war" — this is the method by which the communistic state is to be achieved.

Observant minds will recall that this is exactly what happened in the Russian revolution. In other words, social change in the last analysis cannot come by way of the public forum, but by means of civil war. Not by friendship, brotherhood, good will and understanding but by the very opposite of these is the world to be built anew. Here is the very antithesis of the spirit and teaching of Jesus. If Marx is right, Christ must be wrong.

The ideal society as viewed by Karl Marx is as though one were to look through the rear of a camera and thus see everything upside down. Now, says Marx, capital has its iron heel on the prostrate form of labor; under the communist regime the situation will be reversed; labor will be on the top and capital will be underneath. In other words, he sets up dictatorship of the proletariat as the ideal. It should be understood, however, that the foregoing is not quite a true picture; for while capitalism does control many phases of our life — in some instances, we fear, much more than is justified — nevertheless such control does not amount to dictatorship. We still have freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom to protest, the right to strike and to resist. None of these, however, will be our lot under the dictatorship of the proletariat. One class, and that the workers, through its leaders will do all the thinking, all the propagating, all the deciding and all the governing. The owning class will be bereft of all rights, even that of protest; for them, freedom will be at an end — freedom of speech, of the press and of action.

There is no group in America today more insistent in its demands for freedom than are the Marxists. They insist upon their right to propagate their doctrine according to the grants guaranteed by the Bill of Rights as a part of the Constitution of the United States. Yet here is a system demanding liberty for itself that at the same time is pledged to destroy liberty for everyone else when and if it comes to power. It would seem that such a group seriously strains the guarantees pledged in

the Constitution; for how can any group consistently demand freedom for its members at the precise time it is denying the same to others?

Dictatorship is human exploitation. It is always that, no matter what may be the form of the dictatorship or the name by which it is called. Dictatorship always has used, does now and always will use men, women and little children for its own interests. The brutality and cruelty of Stalin's treatment of the kulaks, the wealthy farmers, is illustrative of this. According to the most authentic records, Stalin deliberately starved to death three million of these men, women and children by expropriating all their crops. In other words, true to communism's materialistic thesis, wheat and corn come first and folk come second — particularly the folk who happen to disagree with the dictator.

No extended exposition is demanded or needed to reveal that such a spirit amounts to the very Antichrist. With the Master, men — not systems, institutions or philosophies — come first. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath, said Jesus of the greatest institution among the Jews of his day. With Christ man is the center and the circumference; he is infinitely precious in the sight of God and should be so in man's eyes. It were better that a millstone be hanged around one's neck and that he be cast into the sea than that he should be guilty of offending one of these least in the Kingdom of Heaven. This was Jesus' attitude expressed time and again in parables such as that of the Good Samaritan, and in his own personal attitude to the poor, the abandoned, the downtrodden and the sinful. Jesus says not alone in words but in life that the greatest is he who best serves all his fellows. Karl Marx would say, "He lives best who serves his own class and exploits and liquidates the other group." Both of these cannot be right; the points of view are mutually exclusive.

Another basic principle of modern Marxism is atheism. This is not incidental but rather fundamental in the commu-

nists' system of thought and in their propaganda. "Religion is the opiate of the people" is the familiar slogan of Marxism. In Russia, religion has been ruthlessly liquidated; the properties of the churches have been confiscated and turned over to the workers for the organizations of cultural clubs. Thousands of priests, according to oft-repeated and insistent reports, have been slain. In daily newspaper, by radio, in school textbook and on the billboard, religion has been ridiculed, excoriated, condemned.

Karl Marx saw, or thought he saw, the church of his day as an ally, an abettor of capital. Assisted by a bourgeois state, the church, proclaiming to the masses a gospel of obedience, humility and nonresistance to their oppressors, together with emphasis on otherworldly bliss, was able to keep the masses in subjection to the classes. And it must be confessed that the church in the past and in our own day is not altogether guiltless of this charge. All too frequently, it must be admitted, she has allowed herself to become the instrument of those who have bedeviled and exploited humanity. Also we must admit that the church has been, and still is, tempted to offer "pie in the sky by and by" as a substitute for bread and butter down here on this earth. In other words, she has sometimes forgotten the first petition of the Lord's prayer — "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Likewise the church has failed to realize the significance and importance of the next petition: "Give us day by day our daily bread."

But when all this has been confessed, it still remains true that the church has not now lost and never did lose her interest in underprivileged humanity, in the poor and the oppressed who were the concern of the heart of Christ. It also remains true that genuine religion is not now and never has been an opiate, an anaesthetic designed to put folk to sleep while their oppressors bled them white. Rather, the religion of Jesus is an incentive, an irritant for social justice; it is designed to make

us dissatisfied with an imperfect *status quo* and to drive us ever relentlessly forward to the achievement of the Kingdom. Someone has said that there is enough dynamite in the gospel of Jesus to blow up the present social order or to blast from it all its corporate sins and iniquities.

But totally aside from this, Marxism, cold and stark in its materialistic setting, presents us with a world that is purely secular — a universe without God, humanity without a soul, society and the individual without a moral or spiritual ideal and utterly without hope. As someone has said, "Here is a picture of a universe, including man, that began in the world dust of the nebulae and is bound to terminate at last in a cinder." What a deadly philosophy this! And yet this is exactly what Karl Marx offers the world of men as a substitute for Christianity.

There he stands at the fork of the road, this German Jew, bidding for the hearts and lives of men, and many there be that have accepted his way. Millions more at this hour of world economic crisis, not fully understanding but nevertheless hoping for a better day yet to be, are wondering if Karl Marx is not the answer to all their questions and the solution of life's problems. Yet frankly must we face the fact: that Marxism with its glorification of the material, its insistence upon class hatred and war, and its dogma of atheism cuts straight across the path and program of Jesus. We cannot have both; they are mutually exclusive. Shall it be Karl Marx or Jesus Christ?

The second bidder for the allegiance of the modern man is Mussolini and the modern fascist state. Like Christianity and Marxism the modern fascist state seeks to become universal; it is world-minded. Benito Mussolini frankly states that democracy is out of date. However efficient it may have been for the days previous to the World War, it is unequal to the demands, social, economic, political, industrial and commercial, that modern society makes. Yesterday was the day of

democracy, today is the period of authority. It is the function of the ruler to dictate and it is the function of the masses to obey.

The fascist state is totalitarian. According to Mussolini, "Everything within the state; nothing outside the state." The state is everything, the individual is nothing. A question recently propounded to the German dictator Hitler, "What is the function and place of the individual in German society?" brought the reply, "In the fascist state the individual does not exist; he is but a phase of the state." Under the totalitarian system life is regimented from top to bottom. Indeed, the state is viewed as a corporate body, including within itself all the groups of whatever kind or nature; all of these are under the direct control and domination of the state, which in turn is dominated by the dictator. Hence, in a modern fascist state, we behold the spectacle of scores of millions of people ruled in all the phases of their life, individual and corporate, by a single human being.

There are a number of points of similarity between Marxism and fascism. One is the idea of dictatorship, which is common to both. Another grows out of the complete destruction of freedom, both of the individual and of the group. The only freedom Mussolini accords to the Italian people is the freedom to obey. Therefore the press is rigidly censored, as are the theater and all other forms of public expression.

Along with this the fascist state is exceedingly militaristic and imperialistic in motive and outlook; indeed, Mussolini boasts that in modern Italy the Roman Empire has been resurrected from the dead, that empire that made the world tremble with the tramp of her marching legions. As such, fascism, like communism, glorifies the material and depreciates the moral and spiritual in life; anything that seems to be necessary is right for the state, since the state can do no wrong.

In modern communism or Marxism, the church faces a new thing. Nothing just like it has ever existed in the world be-

fore, and it will require the best statesmanship of the church for many years to work out a solution. But in modern fascism the church once again faces a familiar figure, one she has met many a time in history. Indeed the church was born under the Roman Empire, which was a pure autocracy, a form of government almost as old as civilization itself, and modern fascism is nothing other than the old autocratic state raised from the dead and tricked out with a few modern appliances. The church has lived under that sort of regime down through the centuries; she was born under such a system; she faced it in Spain under Charles V and Philip II; she struggled with it under the Bourbon kings of France and under the Stuarts of England. And now she is confronted with exactly the same motive and spirit in modern Germany and Italy. But as the church wore down and outlived these autocracies of the ancient and medieval world, so will she outlast these modern states that are simply atavistic revivals of long since discredited social, economic and governmental theories.

Nevertheless, be not deceived. As matters now stand, Mussolini and the fascist state constitute a very real problem and are destined to cause no end of trouble and heartache, possibly even bloodshed, before they disappear. Never in the last hundred years have racialism and nationalism been so rampant and so intolerant as they are in this hour. In the fork of the road stand Mussolini and the fascist state, bidding for world allegiance, preaching a doctrine of intolerance, racial hatred, national animosity, military aggrandizement, glorification of war, and the bedevilment, not the brotherhood, of mankind. We must choose as a people whether or not we shall yield ourselves to this bidder. And again be not deceived. Once we have yielded, most of that which we call precious and dear — freedom of speech and of expression, liberty of worship, individual initiative, and education as we know it now — will all go by the board.

The third bidder is Jesus Christ with the Kingdom of God on earth. He too stands today in the fork of the road and bids for the allegiance of all mankind. "The field is the world," "Go ye into all the world," were his words. Christianity is global in nature. How startling when we think that this Galilean peasant who perhaps never traveled far beyond Palestine, at least in his mature years, should be satisfied with nothing less than the whole world for his parish. Jesus Christ pleads for the allegiance of the last man in this world. And what is it that Christ offers to the sons of men? It is the Kingdom of God. He was always talking about the Kingdom; indeed he discussed it more than everything else combined. As E. Stanley Jones has aptly put it, "The Kingdom of God upon earth was Jesus' magnificent obsession." The Kingdom of God was no new phrase to Jesus' contemporaries; however, they clothed these words with ideas totally different from his. When the Jews talked about the Kingdom of God they were thinking of political dominion, centered in Jerusalem instead of Rome, with a successor of David upon the throne instead of Caesar. Jesus renounced all that in the very beginning of his ministry. In the third temptation Satan showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, saying, "All these will I give thee if thou wilt bow down and worship me." Jesus replied, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

The Kingdom of Jesus, then, is a Kingdom of the God of love, the Kingdom of our common Father, the Father of all mankind. It is a Kingdom dominated from center to circumference, from top to bottom, from inside to outside, by one all-inclusive law of love, which is, as Henry Drummond said, "the greatest thing in the world."

The best can come to our world and to our lives as individuals only as we choose to walk this way which is Christ's way.

We sometimes sing, "The world is dying for a little bit of love"; well, the fact is, this old sinful, selfish, suffering world of ours needs not a little bit but a whole lot of love. For the lack of it, we perish today in the midst of all the glories of our artistic, scientific, industrial and educational achievements. In a loveless world the very instruments that science and invention have placed at our fingertips for human betterment are being prostituted to rain death and destruction from the skies this very hour, perhaps, upon defenseless women and children in poor, war-torn China. In a loveless world peace turns to war, brotherhood to national and racial strife, industry to hell on earth, order to chaos, and life to death.

One phrase in the New Testament has by its comprehensive sweep always intrigued and challenged me. It is this: "The kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." What a tremendous and challenging idea this is! All the kingdoms of industry, of education, of commerce, of nations, of races — in a word, the total idealism and activity of mankind, dominated by the ideal and the spirit of the Nazarene. How different this world would be if we would only give Jesus a chance with us!

But I can hear someone say, "Yes, we've heard all that before, and we've tried it." But have we? During the World War the statement was made that Christ had failed, to which came the apt reply, "Christ never had a chance to fail, for the simple reason that we never gave him a chance to try." "We have tried everything else," said Lloyd George in the House of Commons; "why not try religion?"

Christ stands at the parting of the ways and bids for the allegiance of all mankind. And what does he offer? He offers the Kingdom of God, the spirit of "live and let live," of peace and good will, of patience and forbearance, of understanding and forgiveness, of helpfulness and mercy, of co-operation and brotherhood, of righteousness and justice, of beauty and goodness. In a word, he offers to mankind that

spirit which he himself exemplified and lived, and which is summed up in one all-important word — love. “For the greatest of these is love.”

Karl Marx and communism, Mussolini and fascism, Christ and the Kingdom of God — each today bids for your allegiance and mine. What is your answer? As for me, with all my heart, my life and my strength, I yield to the third bidder. In him and him alone there is hope for our ailing world.

THE ETERNAL CHURCH

BY HENRY KENDALL BOOTH

The church of the living God, the pillar and buttress of the truth.

I TIM. 3:15

There is no modern institution that has been more affected by our changing psychology than the Christian church. A decade ago it was the target of a mass of criticisms which held it up before men as an object of ridicule and scorn. That attitude has subtly and swiftly changed; harsh and sharp criticism has given way to practically complete indifference, and there is a diffused and general opinion, not always articulate, that the church is a spent force, a moribund institution, that it has no function or place in the modern world, that while it once may have had a very large field of activity and occupied a highly important place in human life and had a very definite function to perform, in this modern world of ours the church is no longer needed. That is a very brutal and frank expression of what lies in the back of the minds of a great host of people, who never give it that frank expression but who have that feeling none the less.

And he must be blind who cannot see that the effect of this attitude is far more serious for the Christian church than that of sharp criticism and bitter attack. An institution that is being attacked is something that is having an effect upon men, and the reactions it thus creates are proof that it has real power. There is a very real danger that this spirit abroad today, while seemingly less dangerous to the Christian church, may be really more dangerous.

The pathetic and tragic part of it all is that there never was a time when the church was more needed than today, when it was more vital for the life of mankind than today.

Christians ought honestly to face that fact. For our own sakes and for the sake of the work entrusted to our care and for the deepening of our own spirit of consecration, we ought to see clearly why the church is so desperately needed now.

First of all, we can see that the civilization we have builded about us is definitely materialistic. We have not built a spiritual world but a material one, and the achievements of the past fifty years about which we boast so much are in the realm of material and not of spiritual growth. We are certainly no higher in the scale of spiritual understanding now than we have been in the past. But over against that is the perfectly amazing and almost miraculous transformation in the whole outward aspect of living. We live in a fashion more comfortable, rich and luxurious than any other race or generation has ever known, and there are a thousand and one ways in which this new spirit of science harnessed to industry is constantly creating a more and more comfortable, delightful material world in which men may live.

Now along with this materialistic civilization there has come to men in these recent years a rather vague, confused, somewhat inchoate feeling that there is something wrong, that there is something lacking in all these creature comforts. Though we pile them up mountain-high, though we build our skyscrapers ever nearer to heaven, still the heart of man and his inward spirit are not satisfied. We know that these material things that we grasp for so eagerly are apples of Sodom which crumble at the touch.

And we have learned in our mad rush after material things how little after all they really count. The human heart is hungry and the human spirit is eager for something that will bring satisfaction to the inward life. We may well call it the hunger for God. Wherever any group or cult can come forward with that kind of promise to the human spirit, it instantly has adherents. Whether the cult be sane or bizarre, whether the leader be sincere or unscrupulous, the crowds

flock to any organization today that will offer to men a satisfaction for this craving of the inward spirit.

With all its faults and all its losses and all its failures, the Christian church still remains the one place in the modern world where men can find a genuine, constructive, wholesome philosophy of life and a teaching of the practical aspects of what we call religion, tested and tried by centuries of use. Not some experiment in living, not some strange vagary of psychology, but what has been tested in the furnace of affliction and what has been tried out in the laboratory of life — this is what the church is offering to men. Now I know that that need is here, that terrible hunger of men for God. And I still believe with all my heart, not because I am a minister but because I am a student of life, that there is no place where men are going to find quite the same genuine satisfaction for that hunger as they will find in the church.

I do not need to say to you that our thought is terribly confused today. Whereas a generation or more ago we saw somewhat clearly, or thought we did, what the issues of life were, today most of us confess that we are agnostics. We do not know, for we are living in a fog, in a kind of hazy, twilight era, in which it is hard to see objects clearly and where issues do not plainly set themselves forth so that we may grasp them firmly.

There never was a time when men needed a solid, constructive, sane philosophy of life quite so much as now. I believe that the church offers that sane and constructive philosophy as does no other institution. Its main purpose is not to save bad men but to hold good men. What concerns me most is to see intelligent, honest, upright people, the very finest citizenship we have in America today, outside the Christian church, indifferent to it and careless of its claims. They ought to be united in constructive work for a better world, ought to find a common bond of union so that they might

march forward as a great army to make righteousness rule in the world.

What the church needs is not campaigns of evangelism to reach the man in the gutter, but a campaign of education to reach the man who has never thought of being in the gutter, to capture the fine, upstanding citizen who wants to do right, who has high ideals and principles and purposes. We could accomplish infinitely more for the Kingdom of God, for the abolition of crime, the ending of evil and the stamping out of the forces of unrighteousness in America if we as Christian churches would concentrate our thoughts and attention on getting hold of this type of person. I think this kind of man is outside the church largely because he has not always found in the church the sort of constructive philosophy of life he wants. He is a man of intelligence, and he recoils from the crudities of thinking and attitude that he has often found in the church. He is a man of very high ideals and noble purposes, but he has been repelled by certain presentations of Christianity that seem to him to be nothing but forms of crass selfishness.

The modern church however offers a constructive philosophy of living, based on solid foundations of fact and truth, weighed and tested and analyzed until we know that they will stand scientifically. This philosophy has no quarrel with science or with anything science has achieved or learned, and those who hold it have no repugnance for any sound and tested social philosophy, whatever it be. It is an open-minded, broad-gauge presentation of the essentials of living in modern terms. That is what men want, and I say that the church offers it to them and will continue so to do as no other institution in the world can. The whole teaching of the church, the whole purpose of its presentation of the message of Christianity in the future, must be increasingly concentrated upon bringing into its fellowship, not as mere observers but as par-

ticipants in its work, these millions of splendid folk in every community who ought to be inside the church in order to unite their efforts towards the making of a better world.

Everyone recognizes that we are living in a time of shifting moral standards. What once was white and black is pretty largely gray, terribly blurred. We are not so sure about what is right as our fathers were; we are not quite so convinced that we know just what wrong is. In view of the attitude of so many of our leaders of thought toward this whole matter of morals, as though it were simply what they call mores or customs, it is not easy for anyone to be quite so positive today as our fathers were about right and wrong.

What, for example, are you going to do about drinking alcoholic beverages? Many boys and girls from good church families are now drinking. Is it right or wrong? Where are you going to draw the line? What are you going to make your standards? Cigarette smoking among girls is becoming increasingly prevalent, even among those in church homes. What are you going to do about this? Is it right or wrong? What are you going to say to your young people? It is not so easy to draw up a code now as it was a generation or more ago when everything in society was dead set against certain practices and customs.

But I believe the church is still performing a great function and still can continue to perform it indefinitely when she is centering her thought and her teaching upon the great fundamental principles of the Bible. After all is said and done, this ancient book is a book of life. It was not created in a vacuum, it was not built up in a cloister, it was not thought through in some university where men had shut themselves away from the world. It just came up out of the hurly-burly of life and out of a thousand years and more of actual tests in the laboratory of experience.

Those men and women whose life experiences are part of the biblical record have left some sound and well constructed

ideas about how people ought to live. The relationships of men in society in all its ramifications are set forth here with clearness and cogency. Not only do we see what men ought to be, as set forth in precepts and laws and institutions and ordinances; we have something infinitely more of value than that: the way in which we see revealed in life that "the wages of sin is death, and that the gift of God is eternal life." Bad men and bad women, as well as good men and good women, walk through the Bible's pages. I do not know any book in all the world where you can follow the process of degeneration more clearly as set forth in accordance with sound psychology than here, or where you can see the growth of character from strength to strength portrayed so clearly as here. The church is the only institution I know anything about in the modern world that is teaching the Bible at all. It is nearly a lost book.

The church is the one place where the biblical standards of morals — that is, the relationships of men in the various forms of social contact — are set forth, as they were tested and tried by generations of living. These old, old fundamental principles still hold good. Perhaps nothing ever done by the motion picture industry was quite so emphatic in its teaching of a better life as the film called "The Ten Commandments." I shall never forget that modern slang expression of the boy in that film — that, after all, the Ten Commandments may be ancient but there is a terrible punch in each of them. There is. The man or woman who violates them experiences the penalty today as always. The same punishments attached to these great moral laws of Scripture are just as sure today as when the laws were first written.

I am convinced that the Christian church has something yet to teach to the generation of our day, something that will focus and clarify its shifting and chaotic and confused moral outlook, something that will bring it back to those solid fundamentals of living upon which man will always have to build,

which he can never escape because they are part of universal human experience.

We are living in a time of spiritual as well as of mental chaos. Men find it very hard indeed, in face of the pressure of life about them and in face of the constant demand of the duties and responsibilities of that life, to build in themselves the kind of inward life they would like to have. The inward hope and desire of the average person is to be good and not bad. I never have believed in that hellish old doctrine of total depravity that John Calvin taught. It is utterly untrue to fact and experience. People are not born bad and with tendencies to evil. They are born with tendencies and desires for good, but with weaknesses that break down in the face of temptation. Most of us are not bad; we are weak. We yield to temptation because we have not the strength to resist it.

Then how are we going to build up that inward strength, that inward spiritual self-reliance, that constant inward self-respect that will repulse the evil suggestion and help us to be the kind of men or women that we ought to be? Well, I do not know where to find the answer to that question except in the church. It is a very difficult thing to find it in the average home, the average school, the average social group, because the home and the school and the average social group are not definitely setting their whole purpose and thought and effort in the direction of building that kind of life. But the church does. And every spire that points to heaven, and every tower that rises from any church anywhere, every congregation that meets, every song that is sung, every prayer that is offered, everything that is done in church, has one great purpose: to build that inward spiritual life. So the church offers to men one particular way in which that life can be built, a way no other institution offers.

Most of the things the church used to do have been taken from it one by one. The church was once the almoner of men. Now all kinds of philanthropic and charitable institu-

tions have virtually taken away that function from the church. The church was once a teacher of mankind; now our great educational systems have taken from the church that function. The church did many things in the past that other institutions and society as a whole now perform. But one function the church has always filled that no other institution has ever attempted. It gives us a chance to worship God. We meet, we pray, we sing, we bow our heads — to what? There is nothing which we can see, and yet we all feel upon us the sense of an intangible, unseen, but very real presence that we call God. When we get together in any church anywhere, I don't care where it be, if there be the spirit of reverence and devotion, of worship and prayer and dedication, we can transform the ugliest little meetinghouse into the gateway of heaven. It is not the kind of church building in which we meet, it is not the surroundings; it is rather the spirit with which we come that makes what we call worship.

Nowhere else can be found so reverent an atmosphere. You cannot find it in the home today. Where are your family altars? Where is your family prayer, the kind that Burns describes in the "Cotter's Saturday Night"? Where are any of these practices to be found in the modern home? The rush and hurry, the pressure and business of our world have taken out of our lives almost entirely any atmosphere of reverence or devotion. You certainly will not find it in the schools. For though some of our universities and colleges still keep up a form of worship, it is the most perfunctory thing conceivable, purely mechanical.

The only place where you and I can come and sit down alone with ourselves and God and have peace and quiet and a chance for inward meditation is the church. There you can find an opportunity to build up your own inward life by that hour of communion with your God. You go to church to find God and to gain that inner strength that you need to resist temptation, that comfort in your soul to meet the struggles of

life and its sorrows. You go for all those things that impart something to you in that hour of worship; you get them and go away again stronger and better.

This is an impersonal world in which we are living. The thrust of the impersonal forces upon us is not yet quite so strong in America as across the sea, but it is going to come some day if we are not on the watch. For there are several nations across the sea today in which the state is all. They demand of the individual citizens the surrender of everything, even of conscience itself. That impersonal force which would override and regiment our thinking and our life is all too much in evidence everywhere. It would make us all conform to a single pattern, think along a certain single line, and live our lives according to certain standards arbitrarily set up. Such a force is a juggernaut that rides over our individual needs and tastes, our hopes and dreams. But of course it can never succeed ultimately, because God has made us different. No two of us are alike in physiognomy, mood, mind, character, spirit, desires or outlook on life.

The thing that will help us most in making the best of ourselves is to find kindred spirits who will aid us to build up our own personalities — men and women with whom we can share our personal needs and hopes and dreams. Fortunately all of us have found along the way of life a few to whom our souls can cleave — father, mother, sister, wife, sweetheart, husband, son, daughter, friend. But the church is a curious and peculiar institution in this one way, that it helps us to broaden out that circle of friendships, and so to strengthen our own individual living, because the larger that circle is and the more you and I give out, by that strange paradox that Jesus put into words, the more we receive; the more we give, the more we get back. In the church we develop a spirit of tolerance and kindness and mutual understanding.

And last of all, I think we all recognize in this world of ours that there is a need of change, that there is something radically

wrong with a civilization that is breaking down as ours has done. All sorts of blundering experiments of reform and relief are being tried, yet they are nothing but experiments. Nobody knows what is going to come of them, what their fruit and their future will be. But the fact that they exist ought to show all of us, no matter what our political party, that there is a need of something to be done to change society. And I still believe most profoundly that the one way in which we shall be able to unite all our efforts and to forget our differences and cleavages will be to construct some kind of program for the future that is built not out of some economic theory or some social philosophy, but out of the teaching of the great Master of life about what the world ought to be.

I say to you that Jesus set forth so clearly that none can mistake it, as the essential teaching of his own ministry, what he called the Kingdom of God, and that the whole idea may be reduced to two very simple words: justice and good will, expressed in every relationship of life, in every ramification of the social order, from the family group to the international area. Suppose we had these principles at work today. Suppose there were justice and good will in this hurly-burly and welter of the industrial world, in this chaotic and conflicting relationship of nations with one another. On those simple principles that Jesus laid down, I know we can build for the world of tomorrow, if we wish, some kind of program that will unite all types and classes of people and kindle enthusiasm and desire in the hearts of men everywhere. It will not be the desire for a world made new by some novel economic pattern or some freshly invented social philosophy. I am not personally interested in the least in any of these things. But I am interested profoundly in the making of a *Christian* world, where Jesus shall be no longer remanded to the background of life but shall be placed in its very center, and where the principles that he taught and that we profess in the Christian church shall be made regnant in all of life.

We can act toward the bringing in of the Kingdom of God as a church group where we cannot act as individuals. Through the Christian church there can be a great outreach of group effort and collective work that no individual can possibly match. As a church we can undertake tasks far beyond the capacity of any one person to perform, and in the common effort for that common goal we can find not only larger achievement possible but certain spiritual satisfaction for all of us along the way.

I do not believe there has ever been a time when men needed the church more than now. The church of Jesus Christ has made many blunders, failures and mistakes and has committed many sins. It has been guilty of ghastly travesties of justice and good will. But I do not believe that the church of Jesus Christ today is going to repeat all those blunders or again be guilty of many of those mistakes or sins. I think the church of today is a chastened church, and I am sure that most churches and most Christian people are earnestly and honestly hoping to make their lives count for Christ and his Kingdom. I believe that we have today as a church something to offer the world, and that this church of Jesus Christ is an eternal church. We may change the face of society, our needs and desires and moods may alter, but nevertheless we can never dispense with the church. Some form of organized Christianity will always be here, because in it the needs of men for comfort and health, for strength and courage, for consecration, for deepening of the inward life, for enlargement of vision and horizon, for service in the simple and practical ways that Jesus followed when he went about doing good, will always have their allure for men. I say to you as a Christian minister, let us not for one moment accept this attitude of the world about us — that the church is no longer needed, that it is an out-of-date institution which has no more value for humankind. We may perhaps have to put its emphases in places different from those where it was put in the past, but the church still is Christ in-

carnate in human life, speaking his message to men through human lives and reaching out to change the world through human personalities.

Exactly what is the way out of the present world chaos no man knows. It will not be by any ism or by any political movement or by any form of church organization. It will be by something greater and finer than that: by an increasing spread of Christ's spirit among men, a spiritual revival of human hearts, in which a growing number of men and women will say to themselves and to one another: "Let us try the principles of Jesus and live his kind of life. Let us see if we can make a new world on the foundation he would have us build upon."

Today we are rediscovering the mind of Christ. Thanks to all our modern apparatus for observation and research, we are closer to him than any other generation that ever lived. We have lifted him out of obscurity and made him walk among us as a contemporary figure. We never knew so much about the Gospels as we do today. Is this not the supreme opportunity of the church — to turn its back upon those old methods of approach and cast them aside and just go out and preach and live that new gospel, which is the old, old gospel of inward righteousness, of a beautiful Godlike character expressing itself in our social relationships and carrying its belief and faith into every detail of human life?

The tragic mistake we have made is that we have exempted certain areas of our civilization from the Christian spirit. We have thought that they could be kept apart. But they have collapsed, and they are pulling down all the rest of our civilization with them. If we are to have a tomorrow at all, if the days to come are to be worth living, if we are to pass on to our children any civilization worth having, we shall definitely, purposefully, individually and collectively have to set ourselves to the task of rediscovering for our own lives the mind of Jesus and then of making that mind our own.

Those old words of Paul that have been so often repeated have fresh meaning and significance: "Have this mind in you which was in Christ Jesus." We shall have to reclaim in our own souls his attitude and his spirit and then put them into our own living. This will call for drastic changes in our method of life. I do not think we can realize how cataclysmic and revolutionary that will be. We must not live as we have lived in the past. It will not be the same kind of civilization as in the days gone by. But I believe it will be a better civilization, in which we shall find more happiness and peace as we work together cooperatively in the spirit of love and mutual helpfulness, trying not to build our own lives but to build the Kingdom of God on earth.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

BY FRANK BENJAMIN FAGERBURG

*And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto the children
of Israel that they go forward.*

EXOD. 14: 15

More than sixty years ago Horace Greeley was saying to the young people of his day, "Go west, young man, go west!" That sounds quaintly out of date to us living here today on the very shore of the Pacific. A character in Louis Bromfield's *Possession*, a young man of the middle west, says: "My grandfather set out into a wilderness to conquer and subdue it. It was a land filled with savages and adventure. I, too, must have my chance. I am of a race of pioneers but I no longer have any frontier."

Sometimes this pessimism certainly seems to be warranted. Indeed, our unemployment situation in a measure arises from the fact that the western frontiers are all occupied — great areas which for decades absorbed unemployed thousands. But the pessimism is deeper-seated yet. Sometimes it seems that not only the land frontiers but the frontiers of human achievement also have disappeared. What is there left to do in literature, science or invention? But the frontiers are not all gone. The real frontiers still wait, challenging venturesome youth to claim them.

The popular word of this twentieth century, "progress," in a large measure connotes what we mean when we talk of closed frontiers. In how many ways have we moved up and on! The Century of Progress exposition in Chicago made this very clear indeed. I saw there the first crude wagons, coaches and funny little horseless carriages, and then the modern automobile and airplane. I saw the first crude locomotives, and then the latest Diesel engine and aluminum train built to travel more than a hundred miles an hour. I saw the pair of false

teeth used by George Washington in his latter days, and then a modern dentist's latest equipment. What a century of progress it has been!

But I could not help looking out over the high board fence of the fair grounds into the city and world in which I was living. It was a city in which dozens of men have been riddled to death by machine-gun bullets in a gang warfare which is, seemingly, uncontrollable. Nor is that condition peculiar to Chicago. That day I might have left the fair grounds and walked to a near-by park and seen hundreds of men and women sitting idly or walking aimlessly about with no work to do, and no money to buy food or a bed in which to sleep that night. They were just one company of the great army of America's unemployed numbering ten to fifteen millions. All this in a country in which there is enough food for every stomach, enough leather to cover every foot, enough material to build a house for every family. Not many blocks away I could have seen slum sections with houses unfit for human habitation where little undernourished, underprivileged children were playing in the streets.

A century of progress? Yes, progress in building automobiles and making false teeth, but how much progress in the realm of human happiness?

I saw inside the fair grounds latex as it comes from the rubber trees and all the processes between that and the finished automobile tire ready to travel ten to forty thousand miles. But I looked again out into the world in which the nations were making faces at one another over their back fences. On that very day the disarmament conference in Geneva and the economic stabilization conference in London were deadlocked, and our great American humorist was poking fun at conferences in general, while we poor fools were laughing with him instead of tearing our hair in sober thought. On that day newspapers were talking nonchalantly about the next war, and the devil's workshop was going merrily on turning out

munitions, pouring millions of private profits into the pockets of profiteers, human vampires fattening on the blood of their fellow men. On that day practically every nation in the world had more men under arms and was spending more on military preparations than a week before the outbreak of the World War in 1914. "Civilized" people were still planning to solve their problems like silly schoolboys throwing stones at one another, all as if we had neither forgotten nor learned a thing since July 1914.

I saw on the fair grounds silkworms, and then a complex piece of machinery which knits sixteen pairs of stockings in one operation. But outside the fair grounds I saw races divided into separate and hostile camps, contending for their juvenile and unfounded ideas about biological inferiority and superiority which do not exist. On that same day precisely the same influences were at work that had been behind the race riots in St. Louis and Chicago a few years before.

A century of progress? Indeed, we have made astounding progress in the manufacture of silk stockings, but how much progress have we made in the science and art of living together?

I saw inside the fair grounds exhibits showing the old-fashioned kitchen of our fathers and grandfathers, with its oil-cloth covered table, its kerosene lamp, its ancient wood stove and iron pump, and in contrast the modern kitchen with its tile walls, porcelain plumbing and electric stove and refrigerator. I saw models of the newest and most modernistic architecture and furnishings. But outside the fair grounds, in the real world, the divorce courts were crowded and statistics revealed one divorce in six marriages; and picture if you can the embarrassment and handicaps of the children of these broken homes.

A century of progress? Indeed, we have made startling progress in house construction, but how much progress in home building?

Frontiers? Thrills? Adventure? Challenge? Does any

young man have the effrontery to face this jungle of human relations and weep because the pioneer days are over? My conscience, the pioneer days have only begun! The spirit of Horace Greeley rises up this day and taunts us anew — "Go west, young man, go west! "

Someone said that it was the tragedy of Francis Thompson's life that he never felt at home in the world. Another aptly rejoined, "And it is our tragedy that we do." That is just the trouble. We can get used to anything. The very marvels of our scientific age have calloused us to the savageries of our social life. We start out with our wagon "hitched to a star" and end up perfectly satisfied with the latest twin-six sport model coupé and we never get off the earth.

G. K. Chesterton tells a striking story about a very sensitive architect who one day came upon an ugly house which sent him into a paroxysm of agony. He became possessed of a fear that in his traveling about the city he might inadvertently come upon that terrible house again. He did not know what to do, but at last he hit upon a clever scheme: he bought the house and moved in and stayed there. He never saw the house again, and so lived happily ever after!

That man is not quite normal who is not stirred by the handicaps and perils of a pioneer task. But it is so easy to grow old before one's time.

"When I was young and bold and strong,
Ah, right was right and wrong was wrong;
My plume held high, my flag unfurled,
I rode away to right the world.

" 'Come out and fight, you dogs,' said I,
And wept there was but once to die.
But now I'm old, and good and bad
Are woven in a crazy plaid;
I sit and say the world is so
And he is wise who lets it go.

“ A battle lost, a battle won,
The difference is small, my son —
Inertia rides and riddles me,
The which is called *philosophy*.” *

But that is only one unclaimed continent. Here is the frontier of your own individual life and of millions like it over the face of the earth. What vast depths and heights of the human spirit yet wait to be plumbed and scaled! Here and there we have come upon great souls who testify to a marvelous experience of spiritual realities in that vast world where the spirit of the universe impinges upon our own. But most of us have not pushed beyond the borderland of a sense-bound world. There may have been a time, a decade or so ago, when sophisticated men who had the universe wrapped up in a neat little scientific package, with a blue ribbon tied around it, might have scorned the very idea of spiritual possibilities in this world. But now wise men who have caught a slight vision of the vastness of this great universe are not scorning such possibilities.

A few years ago Roger Babson, the statistician, said to Steinmetz, the electrical wizard: “What line of research will see the greatest development during the next fifty years?” After careful thought Steinmetz replied: “Mr. Babson, I think the greatest discovery will be made along spiritual lines. Here is a force which history clearly teaches has been the greatest power in the development of men and history. Yet we have merely been playing with it, and have never seriously studied it as we have the physical forces. Some day people will learn that material things do not bring happiness and are of little use in making men and women creative and powerful. Then the scientists of the world will turn their laboratories over to the study of God and prayer and the spiritual forces which as yet have hardly been scratched.”

* Dorothy Parker, “The Veteran.”

I looked that day at the world's fair for some exhibit which might show the century of progress in man's own growth of soul. I looked in vain. Able men? Thousands of them. Good men? Millions of them. But it goes without saying that in the past century — or five centuries — man has not made moral and spiritual progress commensurate with his progress in science and invention. Oh, we have done marvels in some directions. For instance, the average length of life has been increased eighteen years since 1850. But increasing the human life-span is not the chief concern of most of us. Halford Luccock has said: "The deepest problem is not to add years to our life, but life to our years." Just so! The deep hunger of our age is not to live longer but to live more happily. Suicide statistics, together with the spirit of cynicism and disillusionment with life, indicate that many would as soon have the average length of life less than it is. What they want terrifically is to know how to live significantly. Some may be absorbed in quantity of living; but quality of life, ah, that is the problem! No one is particularly concerned that Methuselah is reported to have lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years. But most of us are tremendously concerned that Jesus lived only thirty-three years, but in those thirty-three years lived so significantly that he will be known forever.

A century of progress! This very century of progress in science and invention has brought forth many elements that would retard man's own inner growth. In the first place, it has mothered a materialistic philosophy and a mechanistic psychology that would poison the very fountainhead of man's soul-growth as they destroy his faith in himself. Some have emerged with a faith in humanism which makes man the norm and center of all thought and achievement, but we go on to destroy this norm as we disillusion man about himself. Our philosophy flowers out in such inspiring and elevating definitions of man as these: "Man is a parasite on the epidermis of a midget planet"; "Man is an ape who chatters to himself of

kinship with the archangels while filthily he digs for ground-nuts"; "Man is only a bundle of cellular matter upon its way to become manure"; "Man is a sick fly taking a dizzy ride on a gigantic flywheel; he is lazy, improvident, unclean." It becomes easier to be sympathetic with such smart-aleck definitions than with the older but equally reasonable one: "Man is a little lower than the angels." If we are not careful, we accept such an estimate of man's real meaning and worth as is expressed in this calculation: "The average man five feet ten inches tall and weighing a hundred and fifty pounds contains just enough fat to manufacture seven bars of soap, enough iron to make two two-penny nails, enough salt to season one hard-boiled egg, enough sugar to sweeten one cup of coffee, enough lime to whitewash one medium-sized chicken coop, enough sulphur to rid one Pomeranian dog of fleas."

Then there is a type of modern psychology which would lead us to sneer at all human idealism as "wishful thinking." The psychologist of this school seems to forget that if one man's high ideals may be simply the projection of his own thought over against the universe, another's low estimate of life is the same kind of projection, and in the end he too is simply the victim of "wishful thinking."

But it is not so academic as all that. Philosophy is not a schoolroom affair. In the end it is the most practical thing in the world, for it determines a man's daily actions. Teach a man that the meaning of life begins and ends in material things and it will not be long ere he will seek to fulfill his life there, and at last his motto becomes, "Eat, drink, and *try* to be merry." Little wonder that millions are madly pursuing a sense-bound existence, feverishly trying to "take life by the throat and choke something out of it."

This whole outlook I saw well expressed a few years ago in New England where some canning company had plastered the billboards with a tantalizing picture of a big dish of steam-hot baked beans. The vapor from that appetizing portion

as it arose formed these words: "The joy of living!" Not many weeks ago I saw a huge electric sign with the same words. This time they applied to a popular brand of beer. "The joy of living" — there it is. It consists of plenty of appetizing food and stimulating beer to eat and drink. You think that sounds ridiculous? Yes, but the statement is not half so ridiculous as the philosophy incarnated in living men and women. I know a wealthy woman whose days hold no greater attraction than good hotels in which to dine and a fine car in which to ride. Such a life is a cross between that of a pig at its trough and that of a squirrel in its revolving cage.

I once read of a man who took a boat trip and during his whole voyage lived abstemiously on cheese and crackers. But lo, at the end of his travels he learned that the ticket he had bought and paid for called for three full meals a day at no extra charge. Here we are living on cheese and crackers when our tickets call for rich, fine food.

No frontiers? There is the whole continent of man's soul waiting to be claimed. Ours yet to learn how to live significantly, richly, abundantly. And what a continent it is, filled with what jungles, and those jungles with what lurking beasts. No one need go to far-away Africa to hunt wild life. Within the heart of every one of us is a whole menagerie, all the way from the serpent to the tiger, with here and there a monkey and a jackass thrown in.

It is greatly to be doubted whether we of this marvelous motor-radio-age are any better men and women than were those who rode in ox-carts and sent their messages by runners. We may smile in sophistication at the simple life of the old world of Palestine two thousand years ago, but who will rise to the moral character of some of Palestine's inhabitants — the prophets, the disciples, Jesus?

Progress? Of what good is all our material progress unless men and women morally and spiritually grow up with their world? As Dr. Fosdick has put it, "Science is mounting man

on a bigger horse than he knows how to ride." Someone else has said, "We ought to declare a moratorium on science and invention until man has a chance to catch up." Our desperate need today is not more powerful machinery but better folk to run the machinery we have, not finer kitchens and furniture but better people to put into the homes we now own, not faster automobiles but better men and women to sit behind the steering wheels of the automobiles we now possess. A friend of mine has commented: "What difference does it make if a man can go eighty miles an hour in his new car if he is a pinhead when he starts and a pinhead when he stops! "

Decades ago Henry Thoreau was talking about "improved means to an improved end." Surely in this century of progress we have marvelously improved the means, but how much have we improved the ends, the purposes for which the means are to be used? When the first Atlantic cable was laid, a friend excitedly exclaimed to Thoreau over the marvel of it, and the philosopher replied: "Yes, it is wonderful; probably the first news that comes over it will be that Princess Adelaide has the whooping cough." Such biting sarcasm is exceeded only by the comment of G. K. Chesterton: "It is remarkable that the most amazing means of communication should have been developed at the precise moment in history when nobody had anything to say."

"Improved means to an improved end." But ends, purposes, come out of the heads and hearts of people. We desperately need better, bigger, nobler men and women to use our perfected means for uplifting humanity instead of for damning the race. One said it two thousand years ago. We had better listen to him speak: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" This is not a problem that science can solve. Her leaders may work in their laboratories until the crack of doom, and they will not touch the hem of the garment of this problem. Character cannot be produced in a flask or a test tube. Only by releasing those forces

of heart and soul that come from the Infinite God himself can we make men and women adequate to run the world which has been placed in their hands.

No frontiers? This age is crying for men and women with eyes to see the vast areas that wait to be claimed — the jungle of social relationships and the continent of their own individual souls. This age is crying for young people with hearts that thrill with the spirit of adventure which will answer to the challenge, "Go west! "

"Something hidden, go and find it.

Go and look behind the ranges —

Something lost behind the ranges,

Lost and waiting for you. Go."

THE BIBLE WAY OUT BY HERBERT BOOTH SMITH

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.

ISA. 1:18

The text is God's invitation to a conference. It is a great thing to be able to sit down and talk things over. After the World War had proven the impossibility of accomplishing anything by shot and shell, it was hoped that men had learned the wisdom of friendly discussion of debated questions around a table, but that hope has gone glimmering. Now concerning the economic war, which is fully as bad as the military one, it is to be wished that the same thing might be done. It seems to me that if I were the president of the United States, I would summon to Washington a group of the nation's leaders, representing all fields of business and professional life, not omitting the ministry, and have them sit down and reason together as to the wisest methods to be pursued to pull the world out of the slough of despond into which it has fallen.

My fundamental proposition today is this: Since the politicians and statesmen and economists, the presidents and dictators and kings seem unable to show us a way out, why not turn to the Bible, to the wisdom of Moses in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in the New Testament, to see if they have anything to say to help us? Goodness knows, we need help from somewhere. The theosophist says we can get it from the "ascended masters" and the communist says we can get it from Lenin and Marx; the fascist says we must have the totalitarian state, the nazis feel that Hitler has the way out, and the hedonist throws up his hands and says, "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die." As soon as anyone proposes a return to God, somebody is likely to recall the frightened question of the skeptic on shipboard. When the ship had sprung a leak and he saw a group of people on deck in prayer,

he said, "Has it come to that?" Yes, it has come to that. Humanity's way seems to be to try every human expedient possible before giving God's plan a chance; and yet, who knows but that it may be the best way after all?

My attention was directed along this line by the reading of a recent article entitled "The Economics of the Bible" by W. J. Cameron, editor of *Destiny*. He says in substance that everybody admits that religion, politics, education, art and philosophy all receive interpretation in the Good Book, but one is likely to question whether the Bible has anything to say about such a mundane and practical matter as economics. It might help to answer such a query to remind the inquirer that in the brief model prayer Jesus gave a whole petition to the matter of food: "Give us day by day our daily bread." If bread was as important as that to Christ, surely the Bible cannot ignore it.

Now if back in the days of the Old Testament there was a system of laws which brought prosperity and peace in their train, surely they are worth looking into to discover whether any or all of them are applicable today. It may be we shall find conditions of the twentieth century A.D. so totally different from those of the tenth century B.C. that we can get no help from this ancient jurisprudence; but, on the other hand, God may have enunciated eternal principles in those early days which will be in vogue as long as human nature lasts. Some economists are seriously asking this very question — whether the economic laws of the Bible are just as binding as the Ten Commandments.

Does anyone say that such a query is out of place in the pulpit and that these things which deal with the banishment of unemployment and the return of prosperity should be left to the professors of economics in our universities and to the president's cabinet? He who says so doesn't know his Bible. For those eighth century prophets preached constantly against economic injustice, fraud, greed and monopoly. The Jews

disobeyed the law of Moses just as Christians today disobey the law of Christ, and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos and Micah spoke in no uncertain terms about how the people were falling short.

I cannot help feeling that if Jesus were with us in the flesh today he would show the same concern for the living conditions of men and women that he did when he was on earth. One feels he would not draw a hard-and-fast line between the social gospel and the saving gospel, but that he would present the full-orbed gospel including both. Therefore the current economic crisis demands that honest Christians examine the present economic system in the light of their religious principles. Such a study will reveal how far from Christian it really is.

In the first place, the Mosaic law held that all land belonged to God, and that therefore every family was assured of its own property.

It is very interesting to study the laws laid down in the Book of Leviticus (chapter 25) as to Israel's obligations to the world of nature — how the people were to treat animals and the land. The earth was supposed to be the Lord's and all the fullness thereof. God spoke into existence all the produce of the field, and therefore he can give to whomsoever he will. One wishes he were a specialist in the history of real estate and could tell just when the first man put a fence around a little portion of God's vast acreage and called it his own. One really wonders whether the private ownership of real estate is in accord with the divine will. (I am not referring to the second and later purchasers of property; of course if the first owner really owned it, then you, the purchaser, have a right to pay him for it, but I am raising the question whether he really owned it, or stole it from God.)

Let us go a step further: God protected this land of his by the institution of the sabbatical year. We usually think of this as applied to people but God applied it to the soil. The impoverishment of the land was forbidden by a law which

compelled men to let it rest every seventh year. Here is the exact wording of the provision: "Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land." Thus the soil was regarded with a kindly feeling and was considered as possessing, along with the beasts of burden, a divine right to a certain amount of forbearance and rest. For six years the farmer might tax its utmost capacity to bring forth produce for him, but in the seventh he must not make any such demand.

This is a very high ethical view of men's relation to the soil and one that is borne out by many parts of the Old Testament. It rests, as we said, on the principle that the people are tenants or stewards rather than owners, in accordance with God's proclamation: "The land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." Only the spontaneous produce of the seventh year was to be used, and then not selfishly or for profit; it was to be shared with the poor and strangers. It was promised that the harvest of the sixth year would be sufficiently abundant to provide for the people until they should reap again. Customs similar to this were found in some other ancient lands, and it may be that this regulation was a survival of an early communistic age. If so, the great lawgiver is adopting a primitive custom and investing it with the sanctity of religion.

Now what moral bearing did all this have on the life of the people? Well, it showed that the purpose of an Israelite's life was not the incessant gathering of fruits and goods that he might eat, drink and be merry. No, he was to live as a son of God should live, with time for his soul and for the discovery of God's eternal truth and beauty. He was re-

mindful of his continual dependence upon God and did not come to praise himself as the maker of a fortune. The land remained a heritage to him and his descendants, so that the children at birth were assured of a patrimony. Individual independence was thereby established at the very base of God's economic order.

Here comes up the vexed question of taxation, the one which is so much discussed today. God's economic man paid no price for his land and therefore was not taxed. All taxes were paid by God, since he was the owner. But, you say, what about the tithes and offerings of the ancient law? They were not taxes on the property, nor on all the produce, but only on the natural increase of the land, the surplus over and above a stated livelihood. Certain tax evils were absent from such a system as this; you could not evade the tax save by cheating God himself, and you could not be compelled to pay anyone else's tax. The tithe was not a heavy tax on the family, yet it served to support all public activities — and that is more than our taxes do. Moreover, the law required that a taxpayer accumulate a private fund to be used for cultural purposes within the family. Hence you see that when we criticize the tithe in these modern days and try to fit it into our present system of economics, we naturally have some difficulty because it was originally geared into a totally different system of finance. When we put it in its proper setting, we shall probably agree with one student who declared that God's system of taxation has never been surpassed in efficiency or in leniency.

Now when we come over into the New Testament, we find the same general principle carried out, namely, that God is the owner of all things and that man is a steward accountable to him. Jesus, of course, was not primarily an economist. He was supremely a teacher of religion. Communists and capitalists have both claimed him, but he was too big to be monopolized by either group. He recognized, however, that men had

to have food to eat and raiment to wear and a house in which to live, and so he had a good deal to say about practical necessities. He did not lay down a temporary panacea for the financial tyrannies of his day, but enumerated some great general principles which apply to any and every age. His three great social laws are those of love, service and sacrifice. Love in his view does not exist unless it expresses itself in service and sacrifice. A man's property, like the talents of his mind, the graces of his heart and the energies of his body, is not owned by himself, but for the good he can do with it. It must all be used for the glory of God as well as for the good of mankind.

In the second place, the Mosaic system was characterized by the absence of poverty.

What a world this would be if there were no poor people in it! If you were in my place and received day after day the mail of a man who is pastor of a supposedly wealthy church, your heart would ache with the sad appeals of the poor and needy. All through history utopian dreamers have dreamed of the day when poverty would fold its tents like the Arabs and silently steal away. But they have always been disappointed. Why? Because you cannot abolish poverty from an economic system which is fundamentally wrong at the bottom. God's method would do it because it starts from a different premise. If you want a pleasant surprise and a happy thrill, read the fifteenth chapter of Deuteronomy right through as I did the other evening. Talk about a human document! It is certainly a tract for the times. It begins by saying that at the end of every seven years all debts shall be forgotten and forgiven. This sabbatical year brings rest to the land, the setting free of slaves, and the wiping out of debt. The law distinctly says: "Howbeit there shall be no poor among you; for the Lord shall greatly bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." That is to say, the law was intended to prevent poverty, but there will always be excep-

tional cases and so a little later we read: "For the poor shall never cease out of the land." The writer goes on then to say that God gave the people the land and would continue to bless them if they did right by the unfortunate brother and opened their hands wide unto him and lent him sufficient for his needs.

Let us now pass down the years from Moses to Mussolini and see what progress we have made in the jurisprudence of three thousand years. The results will be rather disappointing to the student of Deuteronomy, for they disclose a situation totally different from that of ancient Israel. Let us take the year 1929, just before the big break, when our competitive civilization showed itself as it really was. Look at the colossal inequalities of division of God's bounty among his human children. In that year 2 per cent of the people of America owned not less than 60 per cent of the wealth. Some 504 men received 50 per cent more income from the ownership of stocks and bonds than 850,000 workers in cotton manufacture received in total wages. The same 504 received as much as 2,250,000 farmers got from the sale of their entire wheat and cotton crops. More than half the American people live in rented houses, and most of the others have their homes hopelessly mortgaged. Only one child in eight goes through high school and only one in 43 through college.*

Do you believe the Lord Jesus would approve such a system as this? Do you believe he would sanction the holding of receptions where women vie with one another in seeing which can wear the most expensive jewelry, while a few blocks away tenements swarm with human beings in various degrees of filth and wretchedness? One thinks of the little boy in a poverty-stricken section of a great city who found his way into a mission Sunday school and became a Christian. One day afterward someone tried to shake the child's faith by asking him some puzzling questions: "If God really loves you,

* Figures taken from the *Presbyterian Tribune*, April 18, 1935.

why doesn't he take better care of you? Why doesn't he tell somebody to send you a pair of shoes, or else coal enough so that you can keep warm this winter?" The boy thought a moment, and then said, as the tears rushed to his eyes: "I guess he does tell somebody and somebody forgets." The saddest thing about the answer is its truth.

Well, what is to be done about it? One man who has done something about it is Toyohiko Kagawa of Japan. He is trying to rebuild economic life on a Christian basis. In one of his books, *Christ and Japan*, he tells how the Christian law of love can be practically worked out in the realm of economics. His answer is that it is to be done through the development of "cooperatives" organized on the principle of mutual helpfulness rather than competition. These cooperatives have for some decades attracted the attention of thoughtful people in Europe, but are too little known in this country. The idea originated in Rochdale, England, from which place it spread to other nations, and it has been notably successful in rural Denmark. It is an organization of business on a nonprofit basis for the benefit of the members, the returns over and above the cost going to the consumer-members.

This seems to be a type of economic organization which is in keeping with the Christian ideal of brotherhood. It seems to me that it should be encouraged by Christians who are painfully aware of the ethical inadequacy of our present economic structure and yet are convinced that neither fascism nor communism offers an alternative acceptable to a Christian conscience. Both fascism and communism involve a denial of freedom and a reliance on violence which negate the heart of Christianity. Communism also is associated with an atheistic materialism which naturally no believer in Jesus can accept. This cooperative plan may not be the last word of wisdom along this line; it remains to be seen whether it can deal adequately with production as well as distribution. But at least it has certain spiritual possibilities, particularly the em-

ployment of the brother-spirit instead of the selfish spirit in our economic life. It is a type of economic democracy which should thrive in countries that have the foundation of political democracy. It is a significant fact that the cooperative has advanced most in democratic countries like Denmark, Sweden, Holland and England, while under autocratic governments, such as those of Italy and Germany and Russia, it has been virtually suppressed.

Another thing evident in Bible economics is the secondary place of money. Money has a peculiar way with it. Frederick Saunders says it is the largest slaveholder in the world. We are wont to say that serfdom has disappeared from the modern world, but God alone knows how many slaves we have in America today, many of them in the church of Christ. Nixon Waterman has put it well in his quaint verses:

“It is well to be prudent and thrifty — who wouldn’t? —
And quite self-supporting, ’tis true;
But in getting your money (now this may sound funny),
O don’t let your money get you!”

Our safes and strong boxes are supposed to be the receptacle in which are deposited our precious possessions, such as stocks and bonds and jewelry, and if only we could take them with us to the other world many folk would be exceedingly happy. But even if we could transport our possessions, they would be valueless as soon as we reached the far country. They would be like Russian money. A tourist told me of his visit to Russia and said that before leaving the boundaries of the Soviet Republic the traveler must get rid of all his Russian money because it is worthless once he passes the border. It can buy nothing on the other side. It is just so with our earthly coinage. It won’t buy anything beyond Jordan.

But, frankly, it is different on this side of Jordan. With us “money makes the mare go,” and if by a further study of the place of money in an ideal program we can get any light on

the problem before us, it will be a worth-while expenditure of time. When we turn back to the simple days of the Old Testament legislation, we discover that money as such had no great place in Bible economics. The profit of living was life and not cash. Excess profits and hoarding were unknown in Israel and therefore economic collapse was also unknown, for the one involves the other.

Here comes in naturally the question of interest on the use of money. The Levitical law is clearly stated in Exodus (22:25). Interest was forbidden on loans to a fellow Israelite, but was expressly allowed in dealing with a foreigner. (See Deut. 23:19 and Lev. 25:35.) Loans were made to fellow Hebrews, to help them out of an emergency, with no inclusion of interest, which is the wisest form of charity. Commercial loans for trading purposes were not contemplated at all and were probably unknown among the Hebrews in the early times and in primitive society. While prohibiting the creation and refunding of long-term debts, the law enjoined a liberal credit policy. Credit was to be a help and a favor, not an advantage over a hard-pressed neighbor. One careful student of the subject says that this plan of available credit without the multiplication of debt was a masterpiece of economic legislation.

Now before one smiles at the simplicity and naiveté of some of this early legislation, he must remember that it did not stand by itself but was all part of a system which was built on an entirely different foundation from the one we know today. Money was a different thing from what it is with us. Apparently God, through Moses, put it in its proper place, while we have made an idol of it to plague us forevermore.

But here comes another objector, who rises to remark that we are not Jews but Christians, that we pattern not after Moses but Jesus: hence the question for us is not the standards of the Pentateuch but those of the Gospels. Let us turn, then, to Christ for further light. Most men seem to admit that

Jesus was a great idealist, but declare that his philosophy of life would be too dreamy and impractical to take into modern business. They tell us that is why Aristotle is better known in our colleges and universities than Jesus is, because his philosophy is one of intelligent self-interest. The believer in self-interest finds himself very much at home in this world, while Jesus has not where to lay his head. If you and I have profited by the *status quo*, if we have a good position and a steady income and a share of fortune, we naturally will defend the present system and wish for it to continue. But if, on the other hand, we have been victims instead of beneficiaries under the present order, are out of a job or underpaid, we are going to demand some better way of economic life.

Nobody with open eyes and ears can fail to see that something must be done and done quickly to rectify the present maladjustment of things. The millions who are out of employment are in the mood of rebellion against the *status quo*, and who can blame them? We cannot be like Marie Antoinette in French Revolution days who, when told that the peasants had no bread, asked, "Why don't they eat cake?" We remember the sequel to Marie's indifference: she was marched to the guillotine and beheaded. The multitudes of discontented folk about us today are going to look to one of two places for the answer to their yearnings: to Russia or to Galilee; to Stalin, the man of steel, as Dr. Hanzsche says, or to Christ, the man of character; to Karl Marx, the prophet of communism, or to Jesus, the prophet of righteousness and redemption.

Who can be so blind as to defend our present social order? Of course the only reason for reformation is deformation. My contention is that our social system is so deformed that it needs to be reformed. It reminds me of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* so far as the sanity of its people is concerned. You remember the Cheshire Cat told Alice that the Hatter lived in one direction and the March Hare in the other, and that she

could visit either one she wished, for they were both mad. In reply to Alice's answer that she did not want to go among mad people, the Cat remarked: "Oh, you can't help that. We're all mad here; I'm mad, you're mad, everybody's mad." One wonders whether that might not be true of twentieth century civilization.

Glance at a few significant facts. We in America are said to have a worse crime record than any other civilized land on earth. Graft and greed corrupt our politics, and the citizens of our great cities go on their way apparently in smug contentment, while judges are bought and sold. Strikes and lock-outs and walkouts are the order of the day, and all the authorities from the president down seem too busy with other things to keep order. Even the police in some cities have winked at violations of law, and even aided and abetted them. When one hears of children being born into such a world, he feels more like commiserating than congratulating the parents. Wheat is stored up by the government in hundreds and millions of bushels, while millions of people go hungry, unable to buy bread, which is just as expensive as when wheat was scarce. Don't tell me, my friends, that modern economists laugh at the suggestion of Moses and Jesus. It's the other way round — Moses and Jesus can laugh at them. What do you suppose the angels think of the mess we are in today? Are you proud of America and of the earth? Well, God knows, I'm not. I am nearer ashamed of being an American and a modern earth-born man than I have ever been in my life. Who will show us the way out?

Look at our moral situation. Our stage and movie screens and our printed page have reached such a low ebb that even a friend of the stage has said that this age of ours will some day be known as the dirty decade. Even good clean fun over the radio was spoiled on a recent Sunday broadcast and, to the surprise of the National Broadcasting Company, such a deluge of telegrams came from an offended public that they realized

there was some decency left in America. Think of Barton, a former cartoonist of the *New Yorker* and *Life*, two typical smart-set publications, who committed suicide, a victim of his own cynicism. Shortly before his death, in his restless search for peace of spirit, he went to Europe, where, he said, a man could drink without interference from anybody; but he came back to America and killed himself, leaving as his commentary on New York life the words: "We are all crazy together over here." There's the Cheshire Cat again!

Well, what has all this to do with the economic question? You see, God has created a world for the development of personality, and yet he has seen fit to give it an economic setting. We cannot get away from the necessity of handling money. How can churches keep open except through the payment of money? How are they built? How long can missionaries keep going without money?

Now Jesus recognized the necessity of money. The pressing questions of what shall we eat and wherewithal shall we be clothed necessarily have to be settled. God did not put us into a world where ravens feed us as they did the ancient prophet. We need bread and our children need milk and our sick need medicine, and so forth. What Jesus did was to change the emphasis. He put first things first and second things second. He said, "After these things do the Gentiles seek; but seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Christ never condemned money as such. Many of his parables deal with the realm of business, the matter of buying and selling. He had much more to say about money than any other one thing. He never said the honest investment of capital was wrong. The person that he condemned was not the man who had money but the man whose money had him. That is why he told the rich young ruler to sell all he had and save his own soul.

A fourth and final element in Bible economics is the scrip-

tural law of the cycle. There is a provision which might have been laughed out of court years ago, but would not be now, for many of the new cults are emphasizing the fact of the cycle in human affairs. Things seem to move rather in circles than in straight lines. Even hard-headed business men will talk to you about business cycles, but nobody as yet has gotten back to God's original idea of the cycle.

The Mosaic principle of the cycle was a regular part of the divine economic system, but it was not disastrous as our modern economic cycles are. If you study the graphs drawn by business experts like Babson, they will show you that ups and downs, inflations and deflations, booms and depressions, seem to move in cycles. They tell us we may expect panics every so often. Why? Nobody knows, except that things seem to move in cycles. It looks as though God's fundamental law of recurrence somehow has got itself imbedded in the very texture of things, even though men disregard it in their supposedly selfish interest.

The principle of the cycle is generally recognized, though only in ancient Israel was the divine law of the economic cycle obeyed according to instructions. We do observe the night-and-day cycle (there is one case of it). We cannot help ourselves. God has so built these bodies of ours that the demand for rest makes us quit work at sunset. Then again there is the seven-day cycle which brings the Sabbath day once every week. Many folk fly in the face of that cycle and think that God is not entitled to one day in seven for rest and worship. But sooner or later they discover that the Maker of the machine knew more about it than some modern tinkerer who tries to keep it going overtime. Then there was the thirty-day cycle, which made the new moon day a sacred time to the ancients. We have gotten away from that apparently, except in making out our checks and paying our monthly bills.

But what about the seven-year cycle, known in the Old Testament as the sabbatical year? Six years men were to labor, but in the seventh year the land was to rest — relaxation for nature. (I wish some modern farmers would experiment along this line and see if fields would not be so productive the next year that they would more than make up for the loss of one year.) For a thousand years Israel lived under this system. At the end of the six years all debts were paid or canceled and the books were balanced. Imagine what a new lease of life this would give to a man under a mortgage! The new cycle was greeted by a new people, free of debt, fresh and eager for another cycle of work. Suppose in the years preceding 1929 we had had to stop every six years and see how we were getting on and what mistakes we were making. The great depression would never have come.

But this was not all. The principle of the cycle applied not only to days and weeks and months and years, but to a combination of years. Since seven was the perfect number, God ordained that there should be a year of jubilee every fiftieth year. That is, when seven sevens had run their course there came a time of rest. Here again, as in the sabbatical year, Hebrew slaves were to be emancipated, but a new and distinctive feature makes its appearance. All property reverted to the original owner, who through poverty may have been obliged to sell it at some time during the previous period. The freehold of land, therefore, could never be sold in perpetuity, and in case of sale the purchase price was regulated according to the number of years still to run till the next year of jubilee. This was a remarkable social law, putting a check on ambition and covetousness, preventing the acquisition of huge estates and adjusting the distribution of wealth in the various classes of the community. The incidents of Ruth and Naboth show that the law against the alienation of land was in force in early times.

My friends, these four laws which we have discussed were God's way of avoiding depressions. What do you think of them? The principle of the cycle was always associated with restoration and release, not with confiscation or depression. Today we allow ourselves to be kicked into one depression and then out of it. Then we wait a while longer and soon we are launched into another one. May it not be true that just as the Ten Commandments comprise the basic principles of successful social life, so the economic law of the Lord comprises the essentials of a successful economic life?

You may or may not feel the seriousness of the issue presented today. But if you sense the advance of communism and labor unrest which is so manifest every time one looks at the daily paper, you must agree that it is high time for Christians to be up and doing, for the sky is indeed red and the portents for the future are none too promising. Let us who have named the name of Christ seek so to apply his gospel in the days to come that none will be able to accuse us of divorcing our profession and our life.

DEMOCRACY AND DISCIPLINE

BY WILLIAM O. MENDENHALL

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.

ROM. 13:1

I keep under my body and bring it into subjection.

I COR. 9:27

In 1930 a small party of Americans was about to cross the line from southern France into Italy. In order that their journey might be as satisfactory as possible and that they might be spared disappointment, they were warned. They were told not to expect any trains to be on time; occasionally one might be, but they should always be prepared to spend an hour or two reading in the station. If any one of them happened to lay something down and turn away, he should not expect to find it when he came back, nor should he expect any help in searching for it. If the weather were dry, they might expect dust. After rains they should expect the streets to be muddy and hard to travel. If they chanced to buy any fruit from a wayside stand, regardless of what kind of fruit it might be, it should be peeled. So the warnings went.

At noon the Americans crossed the boundary. The Italian train due out from that station left exactly on time. Their experience with trains throughout their visit in Italy was a constant surprise, for every train was on time. And it proved impossible to lose anything in Italy. Hotels would send messengers following the group to return a bunch of keys. The streets were clean, and remarkably well kept. A friend who was more nearly up to date on developments in Italy cautioned members of the party that if they should stop at one of the wayside stands, they should take care not to touch the fruit. He explained that when you have touched it, you have bought

it. There only remains the paying for it. And by that same token, you know that no one has been handling it before you.

The contrast between the advice and the subsequent experience was so great that everyone inquired the reason on various occasions. The answer was always one word — Mussolini.

Everybody is familiar with the facts of the rise of Mussolini after the World War. Let me mention two incidents which will illustrate his philosophy and one of the causes of his success. During the period between the rise of the black shirts and Mussolini's march to Rome, he once addressed a large company of possibly fifteen thousand of his followers. He was a picturesque figure in black shoes, black puttees, black suit, black gauntlet gloves, black shirt and black hat. At the close of the address, a cry came up from the crowd, increasing in intensity: "On to Rome!" Mussolini turned toward them with his usual vigor and shouted, "No, for you have not yet learned to work, and you have not yet developed discipline. Go home, discipline yourselves and others." What would follow he did not indicate at that moment.

As he moved from one city to another, he did not come as a foreign despot impressing his will upon an unwilling people. He was invited to come. He was welcomed. The reason was that as he occupied a city, order, organization and control came into effect. The people were weary with the lack of governmental strength and the utter chaos in many communities. I must not take time to describe the dramatic entrance of Mussolini into Rome — how he stood before the king listing his cabinet and naming himself to each of the positions, how his direct methods and the arrival of his thousands of disciplined troops brought confusion to the politicians of the city, including those in parliament.

We are told that following the first brief party session after his assumption of power, he called the leaders around him

and said: "You may have thought you came to Rome to see the wonders of the city, to enjoy yourselves, to toy with these beautiful women. You came to Rome to work. I will see you in the morning at seven o'clock." And the new government was on its way.

As we know, Mussolini has little patience with democracy. His argument is that no people will discipline itself. Hence he declares that the day of democracy is done. Westward from him, across the waves, is a great new country whose government is still a democracy. According to the theory of Mussolini, this government has already passed its zenith, though its people do not yet know it. But the Italian dictator sees evidence of its decline in the fact that it is unable to enforce its laws. Any law, from the simplest city ordinance to the most dignified document, is a subject for jokes and amusement.

This theory gives us pause. Is it true that our government has passed its zenith, that the day of democracy in America is done, that no people disciplines itself? Mussolini argues that to build a great nation you must have authority, and behind authority, power. Let us examine ourselves at this point. May I ask you whether or not the following is a typical American scene?

A man is driving his car from his house into the city. Beside him sits his small son, four years of age. Others are in the car. Because he knows the streets so well, the driver gives no special attention to the signs. One street has newly been made a boulevard with stop signs at its approaches on either side. Our American, however, his interest centered on other matters, drives past the stop sign. But his small son sees everything, including the stop sign. In awed tones he says, "Daddy, you drove past that stop sign." To see anyone, especially a little boy, disturbed by a minor incident is amusing to the other occupants of the car. One of them looks

about and says, "There's no policeman on the corner; drive on." And they all laugh. What is the reaction of that little boy?

Small children are thinking more accurately and are receiving more permanent impressions than we realize. In fact, they accomplish wonders. A child of two, starting from nothing, has learned a language without the use of a grammar or dictionary. He has learned to adapt himself to his surroundings, to live in his particular family — a difficult task, as grownups realize. By the time he has reached the age of four he is beginning to learn to live in his community, and he learns rapidly because he takes in impressions quickly and remembers them. The small boy in the car with his father is not yet old enough to distinguish between city ordinances and laws of the state or nation. He knows only that there are regulations made by some public authority. He knows that some of them have to do with traffic. Now he has learned something new. If you are subject to a law and if there is an officer present, you obey; if there is no officer present, you disregard the law, laugh and go on. The little boy has taken a step in learning to live in America.

A man who lives in a small town recently told me a story about his little daughter, who is in the second grade. In the evening at dinner she frequently regales the family with an account of some of her experiences of the day. One day she burst out laughing, and when the family asked why she explained: "We had lots of fun today. Teacher told us what happened to her last night. She was driving down the street and forgot to turn on the lights of her car. Old man Collins stopped her on the corner and bawled her out for not having lights. [Old man Collins was the sole representative of the law in that community.] She said he had no buisness bawling her out like that. So she pointed down the street and said, 'What is that?' While he was looking, she turned on her lights and said, 'My lights are on.' The old man went around

to see, and then he did feel he ought to apologize. She drove on, and as soon as she got down the street, just to show him, she turned her lights off again." Once more the child began to laugh.

If our four-year-old boy were now eight years of age and in this room, he would have learned another lesson on how to get on in America. A few years ago he might have attended a motion picture (happily not now, I think) and sat with other boys watching a film recording a war between two gangs of racketeers in Chicago. The play has progressed in such a way as to throw all the sympathy of the audience to one of the gangs and against the other. Our eight-year-old would have seen the leader of the hostile gang emerge into the street at the same moment that a large car drove up to the curb and its engine began to backfire, making a noise like a gun shot. Then he would have seen the men in the car train their machine gun on the gangster, kill him and drive off. And it is more than likely that our boy, along with the other boys in the audience, would have broken into cheers because the gangster he disliked was the victim. That film was a lesson in living in America.

America has a code of law, perhaps the most dignified of all the man-made codes in the world. Even Congress cannot change it alone. A two-thirds vote is necessary to start a consideration of a change; then it must go to the states for their approval. Throughout the country students are writing essays every year upon the American Constitution. Yet some years ago, on a number of occasions, I asked the children in junior high schools what law they would mention if they wanted everybody to laugh. Always, amidst shouting, they would answer, "The Eighteenth Amendment." At such times I seemed to hear a voice from across the Atlantic saying: "From their most trivial laws to their most dignified, all are jokes. The day of democracy is done, for no people will discipline itself."

Already some of our communities have come near enough to chaos that their people are saying a dictator would be a good thing. One hears this statement more and more frequently, and it is perhaps true that many of us would be willing to submit to rigorous regulation if it could be made universal. We would find it a great relief to live in order and to be controlled by law which is universally enforced. We must remember, however, that the dictator not only can execute criminals without the usual delays of courts and without the usual danger of bribery, but can be equally vigorous in his dealings with his opponents in any field, especially the political. In fact, he must be so to maintain his power. If we prefer to let someone else control us, if we so fail in our democracy that we must have a dictator, then we have lost that for which our fathers suffered and died through generations, for which we have fought since the time of King John and the barons: freedom.

You and I know that the challenge which faces us today in America is a real one. Thoughtful people know that ultimately there must be control in any nation. If the people have the controls within themselves, then democracy and freedom are possible. If they will not discipline themselves, then chaos will result until there appears a man on horseback, or a man in a black shirt, or a man with a swastika, or a man carrying a red flag, and he will discipline them; for there will be discipline.

When free men, realizing that there must be order and regulation for mutual understanding and progress and even to secure justice among themselves, together enact laws to accomplish this, and as strong, patriotic citizens obey these laws, respect one another and individually maintain their self-respect, they are behaving democratically. For this is democracy, to have laws that are made by the people and obeyed by the people. But when men will not respect one another, will not uphold their own laws, will each seek his own gain re-

ardless of rights or principles, it is not long until the chaos thus produced will require that they be subjected to control by force. The free, self-respecting citizens of a democracy become subjects of a ruler, obedient to edicts made by another, because they must. This is the slavery that inevitably accompanies dictatorship.

The capacity for self-discipline on the part of whole populations is indeed rare, and one that can hardly exist without religion. A population will not discipline itself unless the individuals who compose it have learned self-control. How do people learn to control themselves from within? Only when they have a reverence for and personal contact with a higher power.

The word "puritanical" has come to be a symbol of reproach. We feel that our ancestors of bygone days in America were unduly severe and rigorous. But we must pause to consider how much their vigorous character and capacity for self-discipline contributed to the foundation upon which the greatness of our country is built. The important thing is that they were men of conviction who held themselves responsible to their God. They might be narrow and at times mistaken but they would not lie and they would not steal.

Successful governmental action is possible when the individuals who are executing it are men of integrity. No amount of law-making can be of any avail if the population as a whole is composed of people who are not dependable. When we read of men who are seizing for their own benefit funds entrusted to them for public aid, or when we find those who are obligated to enforce laws helping in their nullification, we realize the dangers to which a democracy is subject. With all our attempts in public ways to make progress, to care for the unemployed, to develop new controls over distribution of products, and to maintain our democratic forms of government in the midst of this chaotic world, we shall find ourselves helpless unless the rank and file of our population are sturdy,

honest, disciplined men. And the history of our own country teaches us how such men are developed. Our forefathers were religious men. Whether the religion was that of the Puritans in New England, of the Baptists in Rhode Island, of the Roman Catholics in Maryland, of the Anglicans in Virginia, or of the Quakers and Presbyterians in Pennsylvania, in each case it produced citizens fit for democracy.

It can hardly be called an exaggeration to say that upon the extent of religion among our people depends the possibility of maintaining our democracy. If the individuals of our population, because of their relation to God, have developed an inner control, each for himself, then the people as a whole will discipline itself, and democracy is safe. The glory of the Christian religion is that it furnishes this control. After all, then, the quiet, continuous work of the churches is the essential thing which makes democracy possible. This must be our answer to Mussolini's question, "Will a people discipline itself? "

SOME REASONABLE IDEAS ABOUT PRAYER

BY CARL SUMNER KNOFF

An upright man can do a great deal by prayer when he tries. (Goodspeed translation)

JAS. 5:16

When a great mathematician turns bishop — that is news. When the bishop uses mathematical physics to illustrate and prove the teachings of religion — that is more news. E. W. Barnes took honors in mathematics at Cambridge, turned to the church, became bishop of Birmingham in England, kept his keen mind and genial friendliness, and wrote a most outstanding book on science and religion, *Scientific Theory and Religion*. Bristling with the figures, formulas and data of modern science, it contains in plain English discussions and conclusions that carry the lay reader along on an adventure of cosmic discovery. Drawing from the deep well of his erudition and faith, this churchman and scientist can say that “prayer is the greatest act of worship.” Coming from such a source, the statement merits attention.

Prayer has long been taken as a matter of course. As soon as primitive man got the notion of unseen powers about him, he tried to do business with them. Either he wanted their help or he sought to dodge their caprice. Some sort of cry, plea or magic spell was in order. World religions have all had place for prayer, and Christianity is no exception.

But prayer is being questioned. The doubt is not confined to atheists or vicious sinners. Many good people, intelligent people, even church people, are groping. Some pray little, some not at all, and some keep on praying merely from habit or fear, figuring that if there should prove to be something in it they are staying on the safe side.

Maybe professional praying has brought this about. Fer-

vent pastors have broadcast to the Almighty the week's news, local and international, on Sunday morning. Keen-witted parishioners have naturally wondered why an omniscient God needed such press service. Begging prayers — the kind that treat God primarily as Santa Claus or as an emergency first aid in crises — have risen from the lips of sincere, devout petitioners for ages. God in his love must surely share the joy of giving to and doing for his children. But a child whose chief use for father is to beg for favors soon makes parental love a mockery.

A bit of magic still persists. Prayers are "said" as though a word pattern oft repeated might turn the right combination to the vault of God's blessings. The word "amen," in Hebrew meaning "true" or "so be it," as a congregational response at the end of prayer might have some value as a general assent to the pastoral prayer. Mostly it is used like a radio program signature, indicating that the petitioner is signing off. For the individual praying alone it has no great value; yet to omit it would make many feel that their prayers were unfinished or doomed to failure. Even the phrase "in his name" is used glibly with no thought of its origin, as a sort of validation of the petition, a magic formula to assure success.

Such practices and attitudes cannot be changed suddenly. Some of the finest people have them. Yet this may partly explain the queries of youth and age alike about prayer. Is it mostly mummary? Will not God properly care for us anyhow? Or is the chief gain psychological — a sense of peace, confidence, and, as Emerson suggested, a focusing of one's desires and purposes until they become "answered" by the very persistence of a dominant idea? Anyway, does an infinite God bother about the troubles of mere man on his little whirling mud ball, earth? And besides, could prayer change anything in a scientific law-and-order universe, even if it is a creation of God? Is prayer an attempt either to dodge reality or to coerce God? Is it worthy in either case?

Such questions may be judged shallow or blasphemous, but they are asked, seriously and hungrily. As Dr. Barnes says in his volume, "History has proved that to burn men for their opinions is not, on the whole, a good way of suppressing those opinions."

Much prayer trouble arises from fumbling technique. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the great Jesuit order, is said to have prayed seven hours a day. Regardless of his theology, he was a valiant soul with devotion, a big idea and great power. Martin Luther prayed three hours daily. Asked how he found time to do it, he replied that he did not have time not to! Jesus prayed often, seeking quiet in the early dawn. At the supreme crisis of his life, he spent the night in prayer. It carried him through the last hours victoriously.

The modern world is prone to hurry through its devotions. Sermons and prayers must keep on schedule. It is a faulty method. The results are meager. Doubt can easily find root. Of course, no man attains a prayer-life through argument. By the time some saint wins the debate, the victim is in no praying mood. But prayer can be discussed and reasonable ideas about it can be developed. Such reasonable ideas have started many, old and young, on the road to a vital prayer-life.

What, then, are some of the reasonable ideas about prayer?

First, it is an observable fact that mind deals with mind. "Spirit with spirit can meet." Every newspaper, letter or conversation, every attempt by one person to get an idea over to another, is a process of mind dealing with mind. A great composer tries to convey an idea in musical forms. A painter reveals his own mind and hopes to arouse another mind to similar vision through color and line. In every waking moment, minds are dealing with one another.

A second observation is equally undebatable. The methods of mind contact have been progressively refined. Cave man growled, grunted and snarled. He probably had noises and grimaces that showed pleasure. He punctuated a real argu-

ment with his club. Since he dealt with other small minds, his messages were few but clear — keep on your own side of the creek, gnaw your own bones, keep out of my cave!

Eventually the noises became more complex and systematized. Language developed, a great refinement over the brutish sounds. But it had to be used within earshot. Meanwhile, childish scrawls were laboriously made upon rocks, depicting animals, men and the hunt. In due time scrawls put in order made a story, and writing was born. It was a far cry from the club, and much more refined. Stone, clay, papyrus and birch bark all served the purpose. Mind dealt with mind at a distance, silently and effectively.

Centuries passed, and the scientific awakening came. At last a thin copper wire could be stretched from point to point and mind could deal with mind instantly over long distances. Time and space were annihilated in this refinement. But it was not enough. Signor Marconi took the wire away! On invisible energy waves, mind energy could travel to impinge upon other minds.

Is this the top of the ladder? Dr. Barnes says, "Present science is rudimentary. In another hundred years humanity may have grown greatly in wisdom and understanding." Is further refinement possible? The scientist-bishop writes: "Two conclusions force themselves upon us: the extraordinarily narrow perception of the universe given to us by our senses; there is nothing in the ultimate nature of things which would prevent conscious beings from using other rays as directly as we now use rays of light." Furthermore, "the only form of radiation to which we are acutely sensitive is that within a narrow range constituted by visible light. This is a range of wave-lengths ranging from four to eight hundred-thousandths of a centimeter! It is an absurdly insignificant part of the whole."

Science reveals much. It has no quarrel with religion. But science does not know sufficient to rule God out or to throttle

prayer. It is logical to think that finite mind, man, can make contact with Infinite Mind, God. It may involve a higher, unclassified type of mind interaction. Millions testify that it can be and has been done.

Another observation is suggestive. When human will gears into nature, the effects are greater than those from the system of nature alone. Human will could not create a Grand Canyon. Only God, through his natural laws, could do that. But natural law could never throw across the chasm the mighty Hoover dam. It took man plus nature, man and God together, to pour water on the desert and to hurl millions of volts from the Colorado to the Pacific. Somehow, man and nature, finite and Infinite, can together release and project power. This is not a guess, an assumption, a theological abstraction. It is cold, hard, observable fact.

If we put some of these items together, prayer begins to look quite reasonable. If mind deals with mind on the human basis, why may not the same hold true on the God basis? The infinite mind of God and the finite mind of man ought to be able to make contact. They ought to be able to do it with a minimum of material connection. Furthermore, when linked with God man should be able to do things beyond his own powers. Likewise, God himself can do more with man than without him. Though God is unlimited in power, there must be channels through which it can flow. Man may be a channel to release God's power.

Thus the old idea of praying for a sinner would seem to have had real value. Objectors have held that either such praying did no good or violated the free will of the sinner. As S. D. Gordon has pointed out, however, a sinner's free will is already violated by sin. Sin's enslavement cancels freedom. A voice, a kindly hand, a fervent utterance — all may assist in creating a critical moment in a sinner's thoughts and *convert*, or turn, him. But whatever the psychological machinery may be, it is reasonable to think that God has chosen to release his

saving power through the human channel of an earth-child who cares enough for someone to pray.

When the sophisticate or the psychologist avers that a changed life or the "peace that passeth understanding" comes largely as the result of auto-suggestion or semi-hypnosis, it may be that he is seeing the wheels but ignoring the watch. It would be as sane as looking into a radio box and sagely declaring that the glass tubes make the program. After all, they are but media through which it happens. A man at prayer is more than a textbook discussion.

It is reasonable to liken prayer to a power circuit. The contact of finite mind with God admits power into the individual. He finds himself able to do more. Without it, he is not even his own best self; with it, he can be his full self plus. This explains the dynamic of the men of prayer. More brain cells operate. Thoughts and emotions fit to some life plan. In persecution, praying people possess courage and stamina invincible. A crucified Jesus, a beaten, shipwrecked Paul, a mangled Christian in the arena, a burning Huss or Latimer — all found in prayer a means of drawing power from Something or Someone in the universe.

But the circuit does not end within oneself. The power can be transmitted. No one knows how, but it happens. Mothers have prayed for sons, pastors have prayed for the flock, churches have prayed for people and communities. Men have prayed in critical moments, involving other wills. They prayed for a church triumphant over Rome — and got it. They prayed for an open Bible — and got it. They prayed for an open door in heathen lands — and got it, and all too often made poor use of it. They prayed for freedom of religious thought — and got that. They prayed for a dry America and got a good start but failed to educate an oncoming generation to appreciate it. Thousands pray today for economic freedom, and it is advancing.

Prayers for peace, for proper leaders, for community betterment, for righteousness and the will of God in all things — such prayers are in order. God could make his world all over by himself, but he chooses not to. We are in partnership. We must close the switch that transmits his power. Then within the pattern of his laws in a law-and-order and cause-and-effect universe, things begin to happen. Prayer modifies events. It changes lives. It molds world processes. It solves individual problems. It lets God in, and lets him out.

The modifications violate no "laws of nature." Natural law is God's law. As Bishop Barnes has pointed out, even praying for rain may be sensible, unless someone could absolutely prove that we live in a closed mechanical system in a godless universe. God does not alter his laws of meteorology, but no one knows just what goes on in a cosmic order of universal energy when kneeling drouth-stricken farmers project mind power out into the system. They are not empty vacuum spots in the world order. Their fervent prayer-energy may be a new factor of causality in the general scheme of things, resulting in a new effect pattern — rain.

Let any smile who will, the pathway of religion is crowded with innumerable intelligent men and women who can point to personal experiences wherein the invisible power of prayer acted upon their visible material surroundings or solved their personal problems. The great psychologist, James, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, cites George Müller, who died worth about a hundred and sixty pounds, yet during his lifetime had actually prayed into his religious work over a million and a half. A "too busy" college girl, persuaded to go to noonday chapel, found there the solution to days of anxiety about a home problem. An officer on an Alaska boat, son of missionaries, and handling crews this very day without profanity, found himself on the bridge in a tortuous, current-lashed channel, blanketed in fog. A fervent prayer was

punctuated by a sudden rift in the fog and a glimpse of a towering peak, a landmark to every mariner in those waters. These things are happening to praying people.

Such prayer is not, as the old hymn claims, "the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." Such a definition is mere sentimentality, sung by congregations that fortunately pay little attention to the words anyhow. Prayer that was but formless desire would be poor stuff to live by.

The old Hebrews experimented much with prayer. The Psalms are saturated with it. Ever the Hebrews insisted that there was some correlation between the prayers of the righteous and welfare. Certain Old Testament passages indicate a belief that material prosperity could be prayed into existence. It would be dangerous to say that when a man prays hard enough for a million dollars he will get it; it would be equally dangerous to assert that a good Christian should never pray about the mortgage, the sick baby or daily bread.

To pray selfishly for material benefits is obviously a perversion of this great religious function. But prayer is a release of power and, as previously noted, who can prove that the projection of spiritual energy into a material world setup does not introduce a new causality factor that changes the effect pattern? So missionaries have prayed successfully for clothes, buildings, money, equipment. Devout men have prayed about their earthly affairs, and they worked out. They have looked back on years of walking and talking with God and observed that they were clothed, fed, housed and kept safely.

Some of us have found that we can drive forth from the garage with a consciousness of a Presence. Is there not danger? Will not the moment come when vigilance is relaxed and our turn comes to crash? Theoretically, yes; yet in breathless split seconds, another Hand has steadied or swung the wheel. There should have been wrecks, but they did not happen. Is it only chance, or is it God?

No one knows what the world would be like if most men

truly prayed. How many tragedies would be avoided, how many broken homes saved, how many sons and daughters brought safely to maturity, how many economic crises passed? What would happen if ten million unemployed prayed about it? After all, a million earnest voices at any hour of any day on any problem would release a flood of God's power that would sweep the planet.

War can be prayed out. Poverty can be prayed out. Alcohol can be prayed out. Hatred, misunderstanding, sin, suffering, all the afflictions of the world can be prayed out. They cannot be desired out. We cannot sit by and wait for God to do it for us. A praying Christian is likely to be a working Christian. Man alone has never been able to whip sin, but when he closes the circuit with God he projects both himself and God into the situation. That is an invincible combination in any problem.

Another aspect of prayer seems reasonable. Prayer should be a function of friendship. In the welter of labored theology down through the centuries, too many have lost sight of the foundation stones of Christianity. Jesus revealed a friendly God in a friendly universe. His prayers were not primarily askings; they were spontaneous expressions of thankfulness, or friendly conversations. "Our Father" and "I have called you friends" are the keys that will unlock the treasure chest of Jesus' theology. What one believes is important, but signing on a creedal dotted line is not the acme of Christian perfection. Explaining how and why Jesus was what he was is less important than thinking and living as he did.

Prayer is communion with our Best Friend. This communion is basically as simple as the word "friendship" can make it. Friends get together. They talk. They discuss items known to both and even enjoy recounting them repeatedly. Folks like to "talk it over." A joke, an adventure, or some personal incident has aroused an emotion. It can do so again. The retelling is an attempt to capture once more the

original emotional thrill. In the telling, the emotion is intensified because shared with another.

It is this renewal of a treasured emotion or memory and this sharing and deepening of experience that makes the prayer of communion so wonderful. Theoretically, we might place problems before God once and that would be enough. At a tender age we might have asked him to be our daily guide through life, and then consider the matter closed, a sort of standing order on the heavenly books. Such a theory would find little acceptance in any creed or denomination, and rightly so.

Prayer would mean more to many people if it were practiced as a daily chat with a friend. We recount to a friend our hopes, our joys, our sorrows, our fears. We may ask help or guidance. We may seek a friend's forgiveness if we have hurt him. We may mention other friends and their needs. We might even ask that something be done to benefit them. Calm, strength and new ideas often follow a good conversation with a trusted friend.

All this is mind dealing with mind and finding great profit in the process. Both minds benefit, for each gives something to and draws something from the other. Why should it not work with God? Why not greet him in the morning and mention a few of the things of common interest for the day? Why not a cheery "good night" and a word of thankfulness for a day of blessing? Day after day, as life flows on, it can be talked over with God. There is no mystery in daily guidance and God's will and protection. Talk to him as to a friend.

But can God be "bothered" with us? Will he attend to man's little troubles? Between true friends, weighty matters or petty are all a part of the sharing. If God is not such a true friend, he is not worth having; if he is, then the friendship demands cultivation. God's infinity guarantees his attention. A super-garage-man who was above heeding a motor's details would make a sorry mess of a car. The great mechanic is

great because he is acutely conscious of every bolt and pin in the machine. The greater the mind, the greater the capacity for detail. Almighty God's almightiness and his infinite love are guarantees that he can and does know about us, and cares. When two friends really know about each other and really care, they are inevitably drawn deeper into friendship and together they weave a pattern of life. Why not be friends with God, and pray?

A reasonable idea seldom suggested is that prayer may be an avenue to loved ones beyond the grave. Let us remember that Christian faith assumes that loved ones in the Great Beyond are in some type of new spiritual existence in fellowship with God. Most of us doubt that we can communicate directly, but what a comfort it would be sometimes to feel that some affirmation of our continued remembrance and love might in some way reach our loved ones over there. How about a three-way hookup? Our loved ones are in contact with God. We, through prayer, are also in contact with him. Then *through* him may we not send forth to our dear ones our love thoughts, to register in some way unknown to us now? We have insufficient data to prove that our dead can send back earthward. In fact, many feel that it may be God's plan that no one is to be burdened with earth cares after passing on. But like a radiogram catching up with a speeding plane, so may our messages reach those beyond, caught and relayed by the Supreme Operator, our God and our Father. Such a concept may seem strange. No proof exists. But it is a reasonable idea. It has brought comfort in the time of sorrow.

Jesus' model prayer is still the world's classic petition. It recognizes the heavenly and earthly aspects of man. God is a loving Father, worthy of reverence, clothed in dignity, yet intimate and friendly. His will can spangle the heavens with flaming suns, and at the same time transform lives and build a heavenly Kingdom on a little planet. "Our Father . . .

in heaven, hallowed, . . . Thy Kingdom . . . Thy will . . . as in heaven, so in earth." What a prayer — as wide as creation and as personal as the neighbors next door!

Jesus evidently believed that it was right to pray for a better world. Some can work actively for it. They can preach reform, organize movements, fill public office, foster peace campaigns, fight liquor, purge government, elevate education. But those also serve the world and God who pray, earnestly and with conviction, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth. . . ." Millions so praying open channels; they project spiritual energy into world situations.

We are psychophysical organisms in a material world. Food, raiment and shelter are necessary. Daily bread is an honest, worthy desire. God made us so that we need bread. In the complexities of life, bread is sometimes lacking. Into the maze of conflicting economic and social interests, any Christian can project God's love. Prayer opens ways, modifies cosmic processes, so that "give us today bread sufficient" becomes something far more than a selfish grab for food, the hunger-squirming of a biological organism. It is man going into partnership with God so as to co-ordinate those factors in the world order that will cause bread and the petitioner to gravitate one to the other. Jesus knew how to deal with our material world. Even man's basic food urge he could transform.

Jesus knew humanity well enough to know that hatred or resentment corrodes the soul. In such an attitude, prayers are but vain mumbling. After all, forgiveness of sin may not be so much wiping a record off a heavenly book as it is lifting a whole life onto a higher plane. The forgiving of sins is really the forgiving of sinners. A transformed life is the best evidence of sin blotted out. We are fit to be forgiven of God when hatred and resentment are blotted out and we have stepped onto a higher plane of living, a plane of absolute good will which includes any who may have wronged us.

It is well to remember that Jesus spoke the vernacular of Palestine, Aramaic. In this tongue, the same word can mean "debt" or "sin." Greek translators of the New Testament chose the first meaning rather than the second; hence the current renderings in English, "debts" and "debtors." A better reading would be, "Forgive us our wrongdoing as we forgive those who wrong us."

Jesus' mother tongue may help at another point. Many have been puzzled over the statement, "Lead us not into temptation," for it sounds as though one had to beg God not to set sly traps for his erring children. The word translated "temptation" can mean any sort of trial or difficulty that might beset the faithful. The word translated "lead" means rather to "go under," to "fail." The Assyrians so used it when they spoke of the sun as "going under" the horizon at sunset and of its light as "failing."

This removes any doctrinal argument and leaves Jesus' idea clear and plain to all. He voiced a prayer for personal strength. "And may we not go under" or "may we not fail" in trial. Difficulties do come in life. Some people crack under strain and repudiate God. But the true Christian reaches out to God and, with absolute confidence in the love and power of the Supreme Friend, asks that strength be given to meet life at every point with courage and victory.

Methods of prayer, the development of a prayer-life, the formulation of a program of prayer-conversations with God — these important aspects of the subject demand separate and fuller treatment. There are those who might pray spontaneously in a moment of terror or trouble without thought of any method. But the best praying is not just an emergency device. The best praying must be founded on friendship, confidence and expectation. These in turn rest upon certain reasonable ideas about prayer.

If God is what we Christians believe him to be, if Jesus is as sane and final as we think he is, if his teachings and methods are

as universal as the church has always claimed, then he points a way in dealing with the Father. He prayed in joy, in trouble, in crisis, in public, alone, and in a great model prayer suggested vast areas of human existence that are the proper subject of prayer.

We cheat ourselves if we heed not. We enter a glorious new world of joy, friendship and power if we go with him.

THE TURN TO RELIGION

BY ROY HILTON CAMPBELL

Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress. PS. 4:1

Some claim that religion has been completely outmoded, that in any genuine advance it is likely to tangle up traffic like an ox team. "See religion," they say, "busy thumbing an old book, filled with old phrases and older ideas. See it content with ancient architecture, patting with affection age-worn symbols, muttering inherited prayers, worshipping a person long dead." They admit that it is convenient to have religion about, like grandmother's Paisley shawl; but that it has sufficient vitality to deal with, or power to direct, the swift currents of modern life they stand ready to deny.

Now I should like to set out here the conviction that religion does not warrant any shouldering out of the way — that, on the contrary, it speaks with the only voice having authority today, saying "Look, here is the way ahead." Moreover, I am convinced that in the very nature of the times there is that which will compel a turn to religion.

You will agree that the time in which we live has been sufficiently diagnosed. Its temperature has been taken in private and in public so often by all hands that no one can be in the least doubt about its bad color and general state of ill health. And I suspect that part of our ills have this very procedure to thank. If Goliath had not been so accurately described — his height, his weight, his spear like a weaver's beam sung out to all comers — a whole army facing him could scarcely have gotten into such a total funk. Nevertheless if one is to assert that religion has an indispensable offering to make to the troubles of the times, he must of course describe those troubles. He should state what sort of life this is in which we find ourselves and what there is in the nature of religion that forces

us to turn toward it for deliverance. Suppose we look, then, at what some of us believe to be certain fundamental changes in human experience arising from the time in which we live. See then these.

First, we have set up a state of constant and increasing tension. Get the picture by contrast. There are those of you who saw, in your early maturity, the tail end of quite another kind of living disappear forever round the corner. No great pressure a half-century ago. The things that mattered most for us carried on without consulting us. They operated regardless, or ceased. The rain, the soil, the sun, the growing life of the earth — these controlled our days and so our life within. A man struck and held a certain rhythm — sowing, reaping, putting into barns, then consuming against another planting. Muscles were stretched, to be sure, but seldom nerves.

Floods, sometimes disease or war, tensed one for combat but mainly the old tale could be forever told: "The morning and the evening were the third or the thirtieth or the thousandth day." Even-tempered, leisurely life had to be consulted rather than commanded, its tempo caught, not paced. In my calling, even so elemental a matter as a wedding waited the arrival of the itinerant preacher, and death itself seemed conveniently to delay. The body of course must be disposed of, but the spirit was apparently content to hover about until the circuit rider could pronounce its certain and final resting place.

That kind of living held pretty largely till our generation, but, as you well know, the center of gravity has now shifted. Our day is one of increasing pressure. No letup. Always on the alert. A never ending demand upon us that compels us to keep one ear cocked like a dog at watch.

Is there any business man whose eyes are on this page who won't assent to that? Keeping a business going has come to depend not so much upon raw material or markets, not upon supply and demand, but upon the length to which the man

in charge of it can stretch his nerves. If he is able to keep his eyes roving to every quarter, his attention fixed upon his own immediate foreground, and at the same time is able to watch competitors and the swing of trade and world conditions that affect it, he may get through his juggling act without spilling his implements all over the stage.

In personal relations today there is this same constant and increasing tension. Even talking together has been nervously stepped up by the necessity for the wisecrack. See two, formerly, in conversation. They look about, take the feel of the day as they leisurely commune. Now, however, a man persists in invading your very interior with talk. The overcoming of sales resistance seems to be the technique for even the most trivial tale.

There is, too, a state of tension in this modern air itself quite outside one's own immediate desires or activities. The swiftness of traffic, the drive of machinery, the clamor of crowds, the "look here" of newspaper and radio, the invasion of life upon one from every quarter, the whole world dumped each morning at one's door — all this, as you well know, sends up the blood pressure of modern life to the danger point.

And the pressure, of course, is not mainly from without but from within. Plans, ambitions, defenses, counterattacks in our trade or business or profession all clamor within for attention. Nor have we met the situation by calling this false living, by saying that we ought not to succumb to it, that we can defeat it or escape it. If we do, we simply step out of today's life altogether. Once enter the stream of this living world of today and we are compelled to go with the current. Otherwise we must be content to drift into some backwater of life. Constant and increasing pressure is the order of the day.

Second, this is a time of sudden assault. Now if we had only increasing tension to deal with, the toll would not be so heavy on the human spirit. We could step up our current to match the load. But this sudden assault, this midnight call

that "the bridegroom cometh," hauls us out of bed and we stand shivering in the darkness.

See in the industrial life men ready for an instant shift of base because of some unseen and swift demand. A new invention, a new move by labor, a new attack by a competitor, suddenly rings the summoning bell. Or if you are at the other end — six months' work and a typewritten sheet tacked up on the board Saturday night: "The following will report at the office . . . discharged for lack of orders." The old, leisurely interlocking of neighborly responsibility all gone; a man suddenly, like a broken cog, thrown out the window on the dump.

See it in personal life — inner reorganization called for suddenly because of some violent change. Is there anyone reading this who is quite content about his children? Do inheritance, home training and slowly strengthening character insure against a moral breakdown where social sanctions no longer hold young life steady? Does anyone cling severely to the belief that ancient lines will hold the young adventurers from the rocks? Clear water all about; then, unheralded, the reef.

And how age-long habits, customs, ways of doing things, in every area of life are dynamited! Evolution the accepted way? No, revolution.

When my father came to California, he traveled precisely as did every other man all down the line since Abraham struck out into a land he knew not of. The distance he was able to make from rising to setting sun was measured by the gait and stamina of the animal that bore him or pulled his load. So nearly alike were these distances that a standard came to be fixed. "A day's journey" was a yardstick men could lay down across the land. And that held from the beginning down to my generation. What swift change since in this domain! Four days now cover that mysterious long-time voyage we knew as "around the world." From Columbus down we traveled on two floors, the land and the sea; and then suddenly a new level, the air!

It happens that I am writing this in Yosemite valley. I came here first years ago by horse-stage to find leisurely movement, immemorial stillness, quiet unbroken since these giants were lifted roundabout, mysterious and awesome loveliness settling at night with the sinking sun. Then in a sudden shift came this clamor and confusion which only a vigilant and skillful service keeps within proper bounds.

David Curry was alive then — big body, big voice, big soul. He was the stentor. His voice carried to Glacier Point “eleven miles away,” he would say, and then add, “by the long trail.” “Hello, Glacier,” it carried strong, booming, clear — none since to match it. That is the way men let their fellows know their intent since the world began. In Sherwood Forest, Robin Hood summoned thus his band. On Judean slopes David so called his followers about him. When Adam trilled or shrilled his call to Eve in the garden, he likewise did it in this fashion.

Last Easter, except one, I stood on Mount Helix at dawn and, as postcards later testified, spoke to a party of autoists crossing Kansas, to a minister on his way to service in New England, and to others here and there on the broad bosom of the land and on either ocean who felt called on to communicate the fact. Incredible this would have seemed a few short years ago. A common matter today, however, this opening of a world range to the human voice. A whisper, a sigh, instantly leaps the mountains and the wastes of the sea.

That is the kind of world in which we live — a world of sudden change. Take time off some day and count the fundamental changes that have come in fifty years. In every area of our life today we hear a barking out at us, “Right about face.”

To be sure, men have always faced a summoning call. It would be fool's business to say that this is altogether new. Fire, flood, the leap of a wild beast, death itself coming without sending out any announcement cards. But all these have

been from the beginning, and nature through the ages has built up responses, nerves to tighten without throwing the whole man out of gear. Now comes nearly all of life in staccato fashion, "hitherto measured strides changing to frantic jumps and a rhythmic heart to violent beating." This is another new interior human experience.

Yes, this world which a man faces now is, first, one of constant and increasing pressure; and, second, of sudden assault.

Again, it is a world of insecurity. This too, in the main, is a new inner experience. The word to describe best the weather ahead for every individual, rich and poor, underprivileged and protected is, we all agree, "uncertain." No one knows what lies beyond tomorrow, and curiously enough this uncertainty is not limited to any one realm. No one, of course, feels that property of any sort is secure, but that can scarcely account for this universal inner trembling. The human spirit is jumpy about everything. Governments, uncertain how long they can stand; peace, uncertain whether it can hold out in the face even of no seen or logical cause of war; social systems respected for ages, now distrusted; men afraid of the clash of class or caste; home life, even with Puritan inheritance and traditions, insecure; moral standards with no authority to hold human beings in line; and even social behavior, the last to succumb to anarchy, speaking with a quaking voice.

That is the situation, as you well know, and yet here is a strange matter. There is no exterior upheaval nor are there any visible signs in the material world for this inner tumult. Our economic disaster is a disease of the spirit. Bankers and level-headed financiers tell us that. Plenty of money, plenty of property, plenty of machinery, plenty of everything — the barns stuffed and hay poking through the cracks — and a wholesale lack of brains and spirit to use it. That's true no matter to which theory, individualism or socialism, you chance to subscribe.

Certain folk point to "the nations that have, against the nations that have not" as the cause of war. That does operate, no doubt, but as a complete picture it leaves us cold. Nations are not conscious of conditions in other nations to that extent, despite telegraph and radio. And there are no "have" nations so far as inner feeling is concerned. There is world-wide poverty. The passions of war, you may be sure, need a hotter brewing than that.

Consider this matter of uncertain moral sanctions. People are not misbehaving more than ever. Indeed I venture to say that if you could sample morals today and yesterday as you can a sack of wheat, you would find just as many sound kernels now as you would in any year's crop. No, this dodging about at the crossing, first ahead, then back, frightened to death, is not caused by heavier or more reckless traffic on the highway but by a case of "nerves" within.

When some of our kin crossed the plains out here to California, they had perfect security under conditions quite the reverse. At night they made camp, a ring of wagons, with fire, horses and human beings in the center. Outside were darkness and Indians, not just suspected, for their presence and intent were fully known. At any moment might come the war whoop and combat. Yet I have had this from more than one man's lips: "I snuggled my musket up close to me and slept from darkness to dawn." The possibility of tragedy without and of security and peace within because they trusted themselves.

Here, then, is set out a diagnosis of present conditions, hitting or missing perhaps in some places, but in the main accurate, I believe, as all will probably agree. The times bring us constant and increasing tension, sudden assaults on the human spirit, and the sense of insecurity. Now I do not believe that we shall ever return to the leisurely days of the past. There will continue to be increasing tension. There will continue to be these swift calls for energy. And we shall never have out-

ward situations to justify inner security. These are new human experiences in their tremendous expansion. They showed up in this generation, but they will not subside in it. No local conditions have caused them. This river has not shifted because someone has dug an irrigation ditch, but because a fault, gradually slipping for ages, has finally given way to shake us to the foundations.

What then are the causes? Instant intercommunication for one thing. We live not singly but in crowds. We must react constantly to group feeling. My party here in Yosemite is camping. Primitive conditions are reproduced for our vacation. Tents, campfires, outdoor sleeping prevail. But in the quiet evening some youngster calls "Elmer" at the top of his voice as though he were summoning some lost companion, and every other in the camp instantly answers. What it means is beyond me. But the universal yelping, you may be sure, follows some secret movie or comic-section incident to which each through knowledge and common feeling is able to respond. The crowd mind is everywhere.

Furthermore, there is the release of personality from convention. Each seeks individual expression not yet disciplined by individual self-control. The spirit of adventure also operates; people are no longer satisfied to hug the shore but launch out, in spite of reefs and uncharted courses, into the deep. Then certainly there is the demand for a larger share of the good things of life, which some have and show and others lack. These things are evident everywhere.

In addition, of course, there are causes not so worthy as these, common human failings which have always operated and which needlessly accentuate the worst in the tempo of life today. And above all, there are unknown and mysterious causes which lie in the creative changes of this life and on which no man may place his finger. We may be sure there will not come back a gentler kind of living to ease our burden. The six-horse stage and the sixteen-foot whip will never again,

except on days of commemoration, come up the dusty trail from El Portal.

What shall be done about it? We cannot reproduce easier times to match a limited human capacity. We must enlarge men, we must increase the caliber of the human spirit. Hardier men for harder times is the demand. We are increasingly convinced that here is the way up and out — the way of religion. "He enlarged me when I was in distress." Religion restored to its ancient channels in the mind and heart of man can flush out the tissues so readily used up, revive the spirit, and bring whole new areas of life into vital being. See religion then doing just that.

First, it offers a retreat for the weary spirit of man. Yes, let us say that straight out and let us glory in it. Religion is an "escape from reality," an "escape mechanism," say its critics, seeking to damn with a phrase. Well, that is precisely what it is — an escape from reality, one reality, just as the oil painting on my living room wall is an escape from the bareness of plaster into the richness of a treasured year; just as the mid-summer symphony concert in the Ford Bowl out under California skies is a retreat from the pound of traffic and store crowds at an August sale; just as the sturdy reality of these granite rocks of Yosemite, shaped by glaciers and a million snows, and the singing Merced and filmy Bridal Veil, and immemorial trees talking the language of the centuries, are an escape from the screech of sirens and the hum of war-planes over the bay. God knows it is good to stand alone and be touched by the hush of a lovely lake at dawn.

Yes, we confess it, oh so gladly, religion is a retreat. Worship every seven days in a hallowed sanctuary, with people at prayer, letting the voice of age-long experience have its quiet say; moments each morning with the rhythmic cadences of certain Psalms tuning the spirit within; and at nightfall, confession and forgiveness and new resolve, and then sleep wrapped in the garments of an ancient faith that has a more

subtle touch even than the coverlet under your hands that shows the strong, purposeful pattern of your great-grand-mother's loom.

Religion is indeed a retreat, refreshing, restoring, knitting up again the worn places of the spirit, renewing energy to take on for another day a full consignment of this modern world. You may be sure the full reality of this actual life about us may be faced best, indeed apprehended best, by those from whose nerves the reality of religion has taken the false twitches and spasmodic jerks that some call life. Yes, men of larger capacity are made by the restorative processes of religion.

But that is not all. Indeed we confess to our fear that religion might disappear if it had only the cool shade of the cavern to offer the weary traveler. It has also the very water of life to revivify him, to refresh him, to send him on his way. It has energy to offer the flagging human spirit. First, it has moral energy. It lays powerfully upon a man's soul the duty to carry on, rain or shine, uphill or down, without whimpering, come what may. He must obey the injunction, "Quit ye like men," not in the spirit of shrewd business or clever sportsmanship or good form, but as one fulfilling a high privilege and a holy duty as the son of the house doing his Father's business in the place where he finds himself. And there is nothing under high heaven that will take the place of that. Just to determine away down, where elemental decisions change the very current of life itself, to take it in your stride come what may — that is the very heart of religion.

This spirit is all through the Bible. Abraham facing a far country and going through; Moses plodding across the wilderness and making Mount Nebo, dying with his fading eyes looking out yonder; Paul enduring hardship like a good soldier of Jesus Christ; Jesus setting his face toward Jerusalem, finally taking and drinking there the tragic cup — that is the very gift of religion, this belief in God and his call to men to carry on.

To be sure, there is no theology to back it up. Neither is there logic to defend it. It is beyond logic — like life. It is the direct gift of the Spirit, as many a man beset on every side may testify. It is not medicine; it is a blood transfusion. How it does enlarge life, that attitude! How it stretches out a man with quite slight dimensions hitherto. How it taps unsuspected resources within. How it creates veritable energy. How by standing on one's own feet and demanding nothing of God it wins in some way beyond the telling his instant and powerful cooperation. Such creative moral energy within is apt to shape up men to match these times of increasing tension and sudden demand and insecurity, men of a mold able to handle them.

But religion does more. Refreshment of soul and development of moral energy are not enough. With both of these lifting life, the weight of the times would, I fear, still cause it to sag. Something else is needed and something else is surely furnished by religion; namely, a lift of the whole personality into spiritual power, fit to cope with the demands of living.

The grant of creative energy, the very gift of God to men, the reincarnation of the divine in individual experience giving us "power to become" — this it is which in the end is our chief reliance. We are certain that a return to the institutions and moral sanctions and personal disciplines of yesterday could not, even if it were possible to walk backward, enable us to handle life today. We are equally convinced that an advance to a new social order, much as we stand in need of those changes in human relationship which this vague phrase seeks to signify, will not suffice. Get it and still our job of living will be too big. Life will still plague us in these ways already indicated.

We have education of the head — enough, heaven knows. We have scientific knowledge, shrewdness, ingenuity. We are clever, imaginative, sufficiently touched by genius. Moreover we have endurance, courage, daring. What we stand in

need of is in the very matrix of human personality. We need soul-stuff. We need an influx of God into the dry channels of our interior being. That, religion — faith in the divine, sureness of human origin and destiny, dependence on communion with the great loving Intelligence which bore us and sustains us — that, religion alone furnishes.

Any teacher of religion understands how difficult it is to portray this experience of inflowing power in logical speech. This whole machinery of increasing the vital energy in human beings ever will be within that realm of personality which neither the physical scientist, nor the psychologist, nor the religious philosopher will with any precision ever fully chart. Fortunately that charting, however deeply we desire it, is not necessary to achieve before we may utilize religion. In this we share with the man who hooks up the battery while his full knowledge of this potent process is indicated when he says he is "turning on the juice." Neither do we know how good and great books flush the spirit, nor how music invades the quiet soul, nor indeed how food is so transmitted into power that it lifts and sends home the hammer and sledge.

A lifetime of association with those of the religious community who stand ready to testify to this greater girth of the inner man through religion is enough to convince one of its verity even if that one were himself compelled to stand outside that experience. They are not men either who have been unable to share equally other worthy human enlightenment. Many of them are scientifically trained, critical and analytical in approach, open-minded to all truth; yet of this they do most certainly speak — of the empowering of the spirit through religion to go through life with sufficiency, nay with victory.

Thus the turn to religion, the return of religion, is indicated by the very structural changes within, which living today has brought about.

GOD'S CHALLENGE TO THE MODERN CHURCH BY CLEVELAND KLEIHAUER

Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion. ISA. 52:1

A feeble, anemic representation of Christianity is neither a credit to God nor a service to mankind. The church holds in its keeping the one answer to the world's need, the one power that can turn the trick of saving civilization from utter disaster.

To be the custodian of a great power is a sacred trust. To fail to use it or to misuse it is to be guilty of either criminal negligence or embezzlement. Only imbeciles or children could be happy and satisfied with the kind of world in which we live today. With no one rests a greater responsibility to change the world from fear to friendliness, from misery to mercy, from poverty to plenty, from futility to fruitfulness, and from hatred to love, than with those who pray: "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Across the chasm of the centuries there comes ringing clear the challenge of God: "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion." This mighty challenge of God was not born in an era when Israel was marching breast forward with triumphant tread, but in a time when she had touched bottom in the sea of black despair and paralyzing hopelessness. God knew there was a strategy Israel was not using, a strength which she had not employed. So with divine confidence in the moral and spiritual resources at her command, God issued with vivid clearness and dynamic positiveness his command, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion!"

Added to the resources of Israel, we have today nineteen hundred years of Christian truth and Christian experience. Surely if ever the God of the centuries might with eager expectancy issue the same challenge it is to the church of our

day. We live in an age of mastery. On every hand we are startled with new demonstrations of power. We cannot match this age with a white-livered, sterilized, devitalized religion. We can meet strength only with strength.

What is the strength we need? Is it the strength of numbers? Is it the strength of valuable church properties? Is it the strength of well planned organizations? Is it the strength of theological science? Is it the strength of argument? Is it the strength of physical fitness? What kind of strength can God use and what kind of strength does the world need?

First, it needs the strength of the questing mind. If any one section of humanity should use its brains to the very limit of their capacity to help this muddled world find its way to a better day and to better conditions, it is that group known as Christians. A static mind, a stupid mind, an indifferent mind, a prejudiced mind, is an abomination to a Christian and an impediment to progress. A fitting prayer might be:

“O God, I offer Thee my heart;
In many a mystic mood by beauty led
I give my heart to Thee, but now impart
That sterner grace to offer Thee my head.”

The entire range of human action belongs to the realm of Christian interest. Christ was so desperately interested in life that he was keenly attentive to everything that touched life for weal or for woe. Everything that affects the fate of humanity, whether politics, economics, industry, education or religion, must command the intelligent understanding of Christian minds. Only a fearless facing of facts and a courageous application of the principles of Jesus can save the church from contempt. Only a passion that longs for truth as blind men long for light can bring the church respect and support.

It is well known that in some of the recent social, industrial and political upheavals in certain sections of the world, the church not only exerted no influence whatsoever, but was

thrown out, bag and baggage, as useless, parasitical and socially indifferent. It was regarded as the echo of political tyranny and of special privilege. Too long have superstition, prejudice, bigotry, intolerance and social indifference found comfortable lodging in the house of the Lord. It is time, high time, that the church take off its blind bridles and look with open eyes and open mind at all the facts and factors.

Added to our understanding of the facts must be the courage to use them.

“We know the paths wherein our feet should press;
Across our hearts are written Thy decrees:
Yet now, O Lord, be merciful to bless
With more than these.

“Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,
Grant us the strength to labor as we know,
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
To strike the blow.

“Knowledge we ask not — knowledge Thou has lent;
But, Lord, the will — there lies our bitter need;
Give us to build above the deep intent
The deed, the deed.”

It is well known that the church has lost the respect and the confidence of great numbers of the intelligentsia on the one hand and of the craftsmen on the other, because in the fields both of scientific fact and of economic relationships the church has been strongly suspected of cowardice and compromise. Only a church where the barometer of Christian conscience registers at the degree of high intensity can restore itself to the coveted leadership for which Christ intended it. God's call today is for a church that is unmistakably characterized by the strength of convincing reality.

Christianity is not only something to be believed, but some-

thing to be done. It is not only a doctrine, but a deed. Jesus appraised perfunctory religion in terms that sizzle with contempt: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves.

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, that say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor. Ye fools and blind; for which is greater, the gold, or the temple that hath sanctified the gold?

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone. Ye blind guides, that strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel!

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full from extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

They substituted ceremony for sincerity, ritual for reality, perfunctory piety for sincere performance, and platitudes for principles. We have expressed our modern Christianity in terms of magnificent architecture, beautiful music, elaborate organization and innumerable programs. These are not sufficient to convince a world of our desperate sincerity, a world that is suspicious that we seek the comforts of religion rather than accept its challenge.

It was Glover who said that the early Christians outthought, outlived and outdied the pagan world. Not only is that an epigrammatic characterization of the reality of the religion and the life of those early disciples, but it accounts in considerable measure for the startling impact of the early church upon its contemporary world. A thoroughgoing diagnosis of modern religion would disclose the fact that many of us have only a mild case. A mild case of anything is not likely to be very contagious. If religious success could be measured in terms of doctrine alone, then we would have achieved a ponderous success. But it must be evident to any mind that holds communion with the mind of Christ that Christianity is primarily and supremely a daring adventure in living.

The last few years have been designated as the lean years of economic life, produced in large measure by the wholesale practice of the principles of the jungle. All this happened in the face of certain great and accepted doctrines of brotherhood. I am familiar with the doctrines of many great fraternal orders, which have by emblems and symbols and ceremonies and rituals shouted brotherhood from the housetops. I know something of the doctrines of the thousands of service clubs that eat their way across this great country; the central doctrine of most of them is service to their fellow men. They sing about it, they make convincing speeches, they have elaborate organizations, all in the name of brotherhood. I am also familiar with the brotherhood organizations of the church. There are literally thousands of them all over the country. They wear a great name. They can sing like a band of angels. They eat, drink, and resolve their way through the Kingdom of God — all in the interest of brotherhood. And yet with lodges, service clubs and church brotherhoods all talking about brotherhood we lived like a pack of wolves and by the realities of our lives produced the greatest debacle of colossal selfishness ever witnessed in the economic universe.

Among the sinister influences which today try to intimi-

date the modern prophets of social righteousness are the deacons and elders and trustees who are sound in the doctrines of their religion but rank heretics in its practice. An insidious method by which to dodge the ethical, moral and social responsibilities of our religion is to label the prophets of social righteousness "communists" and thereby becloud the issue and save our own skin.

It thrills one to think what God could do in our day with a church that would clothe itself with the strength of convincing reality. Only by a dead earnestness that makes every Christian "a miniature Kingdom of God" can we compel the respect and the devotion of today's world.

Furthermore, God needs for his instrument today not a contending, but a cooperating church. Over two hundred denominations clamoring for men's allegiance are but adding confusion to futility. Only a church armored with the strength of cooperative power is sufficient for the demands of the modern world. Peter Ainslee well designated the unholy division of Christian forces as "the scandal of Christendom." It was Glenn Frank, former president of the University of Wisconsin, who said: "I am convinced that Protestantism must achieve an increasing unity or be content with a decreasing influence." Just at the moment when a muddled and bewildered world needs the impact of a mighty united Christian influence, the church is enfeebled and paralyzed by division. It is tragic enough that a divided church misrepresents the spirit of Christ, but for it to render itself ineffective in the face of far-reaching crises is unforgivable.

A very heartening experiment is going on at the present time in southern California. The Religious Education Conference, whose purpose it is to minister to student life, is the medium through which a great program of religious cooperation is being conducted. The conference is composed of Jews, Catholics and Protestants who in sincerity and actuality work together in a strong cooperative program that has made upon

the life of a great university campus an impact far beyond the power of any one denomination to achieve. Had such a conference been in operation at every great university center of the world twenty-five years ago, we should not today be living under the degrading, embittering influences of race persecution and religious bigotry.

This is not a time for building walls of dogmatism, denominational bigotry, prejudice, intolerance and isolation. The time demands roads, not walls — roads of understanding, tolerance, fellowship, friendship and brotherhood. As Robert Speer has said, it is a time not for "hands off, but for hands together." We desperately need a revolution in the church — the revolution of love. If the spirit of Edwin Markham's lines could capture the heart, mind and soul of every church member, from the modest layman to the most pompous bishop, it would create a startling revolution, not only in attitudes but in strength.

"He drew a circle that shut me out,
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout;
But Love and I had the wit to win,
We drew a circle that took him in! "

Not by declarations, but by demonstrations can the church be most convincing. While it is true that many denominations came into being through needs which were significant in their day, it is also true that many of those needs no longer exist and that present needs and conditions call for a new technique so that much of our denominationalism is nothing but the "artificially animated ghosts of dead issues."

"On the far reef the breakers recoil in shattered foam,
While still the sea behind them urges her forces home.
Her song of triumph surges above the thunderous din;
The wave may break in failure,
But the tide is sure to win.

“O mighty sea, thy message in changing spray is cast.
Within God’s mighty purpose it matters not at last
How vast the shores of evil, how strong the reef of sin:
The wave may be defeated,
But the tide is sure to win.”

Just so! What the individual wave cannot accomplish alone, becomes possible when it unites its strength with that of other waves into the force of a mighty tide. Where today the individual wave of a church or a denomination breaks defeated, it is possible that on a mighty tide of united strength humanity’s cargoes could be safely and securely borne to harbor.

We are living in a world that is literally bristling with vexatious problems. In almost every field of human relationship and upon nearly every level of human interest, we are faced with baffling situations. Great sections of the world are literally drenched in blood. Death and slaughter are ravishing the world like a deadly plague. Huge industries in our country have been paralyzed by extended strikes. Capitalist and laborer, employer and employee have lost millions in profits and wages. And greater than the loss of money is the loss of mutual confidence, trust and brotherhood. Race prejudice has done its foul work and subjected great groups to unthinkable inhumanities, injustice and cruelty and has driven the dagger of bitterness a little deeper into the human heart. These conditions of human society are not accidental. They are the natural reaping of our sowing. In fact were conditions otherwise, it would be a miscarriage of the law of seedtime and harvest, of cause and effect. We have stupidly and recklessly sown the technique of exploitation, selfishness, special privilege, greed, prejudice, cleverness, force, and we have reaped war, depression, unemployment, poverty, bitterness, fascism, communism, secularism, materialism.

Nineteen hundred years ago Jesus gave the world new

techniques by which to construct a world of stability, happiness, brotherhood and peace, but — strangely and tragically true! — we have never allowed them to operate over wide areas or upon a large scale. Jesus declared the Kingdom of God could be coextensive with the universe, provided we employed the techniques of righteousness, truth and love to bring it about. Though for centuries we have watched the march of time hurl Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome to destruction and to doom, because they chose pagan techniques, yet we have been slow to learn that

“Right is right, since God is God,
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.”

And yet again that

“Truth crushed to earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers.”

Either we must admit that Jesus was an impractical dreamer and his teachings verbal moonshine, and that our profession of confidence in his truth and in his ways is a hollow mockery, or else we must seriously and sincerely give his methods a chance. The Sermon on the Mount, the twelfth chapter of Romans, the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians not only are beautiful sentiments and lofty ideals, but contain more common sense, more practicability, more power for the production of the right social order than all the schemes concocted by human minds since the beginning of time. What a difference could be wrought in this sick and battered world if every professed believer suddenly became the living incarnation of righteousness, truth and love. Then with optimism and confidence we could pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

And, finally, God asks the church of our day to clothe

itself with the strength of a crusading spirit. The early Christians not only accepted Christ, but they were seen "as lights in the world, holding aloft the word of life." They were flaming evangelists, eager to present the claims of a great cause. There is a story that Darwin's father said to him that "Unitarianism is a featherbed to catch falling Christians." Whatever the truth in that statement, it is dead certain that the Unitarian Church has no monopoly on featherbed Christians. One is impressed with the spirit of high daring that throbs in these lines:

"I'm tired of sailing my little bark
Far inside the harbor bar;
I want to go out where the big ships float.
I want to go out where the great ships are.
And should my frail bark prove too light
For the storms that sweep those billows o'er,
I'd rather go down in the stirring fight
Than drowse to death on a sheltered shore."

No great cause ever won its way by clinging to sheltered shores. Every great advance in the history of the church has been born of a crusading spirit. When Livingstone, Carey, Morrison and others became daring crusaders for a Christian world, the church was fired with a new zeal that brought a new level of missionary achievement. Out of the crusading spirit of William Booth was born the world-wide Salvation Army. Out of the crusading spirit of a London dry goods clerk was born the Young Men's Christian Association. Out of the crusading spirit of a John Wesley was born the great Methodist Church. Out of the crusading spirit of Dwight L. Moody grew an evangelism that rocked continents toward God. Out of the crusading spirit of a Florence Nightingale was born the Red Cross. Out of the crusading spirit of a Frances Willard was born the Women's Christian Temperance Union. According to Ralph Sockman, Christianity today is

suffering from an epidemic of silence — the silence of ingratitude, of ignorance and of a patronizing spirit. No cause can move far on the wheels of indifference.

“Set us afire, Lord,
Stir us, we pray;
While the world perishes
We go our way;
Purposeless, passionless,
Day after day;
Set us afire, Lord,
Stir us, we pray!”

There is nothing indefinite about the divine judgment regarding a lukewarm spirit of religion. “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So because thou art lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth.” That ought to dissipate any lingering doubt about the virtue of indifference. Listless indifference is more deadly than violent opposition. The most inexcusable position to occupy is that of a nonentity in a world where great issues are at stake. “If the salt has lost its savor, it is good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.”

The time was when believers in the Christian way of life found little opposition to their point of view or to their plans, but that time has changed. Today there is a determined, persistent, organized effort to wipe Christianity off the face of the earth. This is not the day for rocking-chair philosophers, but for daring crusaders. We are not crusading to wrest the holy sepulcher from the Saracens, but we are crusading to wrest the world from the Saracens of war, greed, injustice, prejudice, race hatred and every form of sin. In that crusade every person who professes any degree of Christian interest must enlist. We will answer God's challenge when, pano-

plied with the armor of Christian love, we go forth as Christian crusaders.

“ Let trifling pipe be mute,
Fling by the languid lute,
Take down the trumpet
And confront the hour,
And speak to sin-cursed cities from a tower.
Take down the horn
Wherein the thunder sleeps!
Blow battles into men!
Call down the fire,
The daring, the long purpose, the desire,
Descend with faith into the human deep! ”

THE CHRISTIAN SOLUTION FOR

WORLD PROBLEMS

BY EARL CRANSTON

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

JOHN 8:32

To face the future courageously despite the evident evils of the present day is a right which all Christians may properly assert. The Founder of their religion, fully conscious of the problems of his own day and of the years ahead, never took a defeatist position. He knew that the despotic authority of the Roman Empire was oppressing his own people and that many of his closest followers desired him to take up arms for civil liberties, freedom and self-determination; he sensed everywhere bitter racial prejudice and religious antagonism; he was alive to the injustices, maladjustments and physical suffering that permeated society; he realized that the ecclesiastical leadership of his own faith was heavily tinged with legalism, hypocrisy and selfishness. Yet he bravely continued his ministry and his spiritual self-discipline, manifesting an unwavering confidence in a long-range plan which would ultimately enthrone the meek, the peacemakers and the pure in heart and establish an approximation of the Kingdom of God.

Later centuries were to bear testimony to the fact that the most complete expression of Christian ideals led always to the fullest attainment of the manifold aspects of harmonious, abundant life. Whenever medieval society went too badly astray, it was periodically called back to morality, stability and new adventure by the reforms of Gregory the Great, of the Cluniacs and of the Cistercians, or by the example of Francis of Assisi, that supreme embodiment of his Master's precepts. Subsequently in more modern and secular days the lot of mankind has been successively bettered and re-inspired

by the efforts of such pioneers as the Pietists, the Wesleyans, the Christian Socialists, the founders of the British Labor party, and numerous unorganized believers in wider social justice and peaceful internationalism.

It is commonplace to say that the many-sided crisis which threatens to engulf twentieth century civilization springs from a failure to apply the Christian faith and morality. The social and economic order evolved from the Industrial Revolution and the machine age seems largely dominated by irresponsible egocentricity. New inventions are debased by their employment against civilian populations whose bodies are wounded or destroyed by projectiles hurled from flying planes and whose minds are poisoned and regimented by propaganda-laden radio waves; the very life-giving air has become also a source of physical and mental death. Peoples like the Magyars of the nineteenth century and the Poles of the twentieth, to say nothing of more conspicuous examples, have sought and obtained for themselves a freedom which they have denied to other oppressed racial groups.

Universal lags in moral standards precipitated the Great War of 1914. At the end of that struggle the victors, who had an opportunity to lay foundations of justice and peace and who did give lip service to these principles in the Covenant of the League of Nations, nevertheless so limited the application of their ideals that even in 1919 a few keen analysts like John Maynard Keynes could foresee that the consequences would prove disastrous. The selfish individualism of the 1920's, both in almost unrestricted personal speculation and profiteering and in national excesses like France's invasion of the Ruhr and America's determination to collect billions of war debts, prepared the way for the economic and political anarchy of the 1930's. Through tragic experience the most thoughtful portion of mankind has begun to learn that humanity must come to its senses and respect basic ethical standards.

The near future, therefore, whether it be an era of peace or of war or of a combination of both, will of necessity afford an opportunity for revaluation and reconstruction. Numerous contemporary ideologies vie with one another in proclaiming themselves to be the agencies destined to dominate this rebuilding; in all quarters of the globe men turn to such forces, often in blind desperation, in the hope that thereby they and their fellows may find security and salvation. The devotion of the rank and file to these causes and programs often presents an unselfish and pathetic loyalty. One must question, however, whether most of these impulses and doctrines to which men yield allegiance possess for themselves or their followers a power of universal recreativity. A materialistic philosophy, for example, may seem objective and unselfish and may offer a partial explanation and motivation, but it leaves untouched certain great areas in which the human mind of today must move.

Marxism is commendable in its passion for downtrodden humanity, and the respect accorded it in the Soviet Union has rejuvenated and inspired millions who profess to embody its teachings; but it shuts itself off from universal acceptance by incorporating such dogmas as an outworn dialectic, the class struggle, needless antagonisms, violence, and a destructive disregard for certain essential values of man's social and spiritual heritage. Fascism and nazism, for all their popular and heroic appeal, are basically temporary makeshifts, repeating in modern guise some of the least lovely elements of bygone political and economic tyrannies; by their emphasis upon myths, racial and religious intolerance, social inequality and unbridled resort to military force they cannot survive, much less dominate, a long series of generations. In the case of Japan's situation in China, autocratic militarism as an expression of supernationalism is already revealing signs of practical ineffectiveness, while its by-products are so morally revolting that governments hesitate to tell their peoples the full

and tragic truth. The march of events is rapidly discrediting reactionary toryism in both America and England. In all lands those persons who by avoiding a specific stand on basic issues would simply glide along in an illusion of day-by-day expediency are discovering that mere drifting leads to ultimate shipwreck. No one of these several attitudes, escapes or panaceas can prove completely adequate for the stormy future.

Some broader, more attractive and yet thoroughly dynamic philosophy obviously is needed. Those who deeply believe in Christianity hold that it possesses a power requisite for the decisive days ahead. This assurance does not necessarily assert that Christianity is the only religion capable of saving society; possibly the Jewish faith, or some one of the great religions of eastern Asia, or a highly altruistic ethical culture might, if generally accepted and humanely applied, create an almost perfect world. But no one of these other forces includes a wide following in that perplexed area known as Christendom, and any spiritual regeneration which may uplift that region must apparently be of Christian origin. Humbly yet confidently the Christian may feel that the religion which he professes may in its truest sense supply a solution for contemporary problems.

"But what," people often ask, "is basic Christianity?" Nearly all twentieth century Christians profess a willingness to follow their Master. Unfortunately, however, they are not always in agreement as to the exact nature of the religion which he founded or as to the specific way in which to embody that faith. But it may be universally conceded that the heart of Christianity lies in the Sermon on the Mount and in Paul's paraphrases in the twelfth chapter of Romans and the thirteenth of I Corinthians. Immanuel Kant attempted to restate this essential Christianity in modern terms through his categorical imperative, his loyalty to duty, his respect for

personality, and, in the international realm, through his remarkable essay on "Perpetual Peace."

In an attempt to discover more completely the manner in which unadulterated Christianity might transform present-day society, a small group of ministers, educators, and like-minded persons assembled by Kirby Page met in informal daily conversations at Estes Park, Colorado, throughout much of August, 1938. Accepting from the positive angle the general position just stated, they went on to find its implications from the point of view of restraints. Admitting that any assumption of absolutes is questionable, they nevertheless agreed that there are certain fundamental, destructive acts from which any true Christian voluntarily desists. Accordingly the Christian should never hate another person, never seek revenge, never place a higher value upon his own property than upon another person's life, never treat another person as merely a means to his own advancement, never be pleased at the moral lapses of others, never commit certain sexual offenses, never become thoroughly intoxicated, never engage in lynching, and never be a social parasite. Some might even choose to widen this suggestive list. Were any such code positively followed by individuals and groups, society plainly would be transformed.

It will be seen that this vigorous conception of a rejuvenated humanity rests primarily upon an application of active altruism or creative love. The word "love," like the word "peace," has been so misused, attenuated and cheapened through the centuries that many thoughtful people now shun its use lest they appear sentimental or insincere. Yet rightly and constructively interpreted, love is the center of the Christian gospel. On the eve of his own sacrifice Jesus reiterated, "Love one another even as I have loved you."

So basic seemed this precept that Chaucer living in a warlike age could nevertheless assign to one of his most saintly char-

acters the motto, "*Amor vincit omnia.*" Four or five centuries before Christ the refined Chinese teacher Mo Ti through a series of gripping illustrations proclaimed universal love to be the solvent of all human woes. When long afterwards the representatives of the Christian community of the republic of China, assembled at Shanghai in the National Christian Conference of 1922, seemed on the point of schism over theological controversy, they were welded together into a permanent unity by a contemporary Chinese teacher, Dr. T. T. Lew, who crystallized his thought in the compelling phrase, "Agree to differ but resolve to love." Most Christian students come sooner or later to hold with Henry Drummond that love is the greatest thing in the world. By its very essence, religion must stress love and apply it with all its implications.

Rightly comprehended, this positive and imaginative love rests upon a belief in the validity of justice and high ideals. In his hour of apparent defeat Jesus through reliance upon the eternal verities could quietly declare that he had overcome the world. The wisest heretics of each age have died bravely, assured not merely that they stood for the right but that history would vindicate them. Nearly three centuries after Bruno had been burned at the stake in Rome for ideas which ultimately came to be generally accepted, the citizens of an age when thought was more unrestricted and free erected upon the spot of his execution a monument with the inscription, "Raised to Giordano Bruno by the generation which he foresaw." In the height of the struggle to make the Negro free, James Russell Lowell in stanzas which nearly every schoolboy learns but which almost no adult takes to heart gave the American people a classic expression of this same truth by asserting that the scaffold upon which truth is sacrificed sways the future, and that

"The hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into history's golden urn."

It is easy enough to realize this fact in looking back upon some landmark where a human victory was won once and for all; it is harder, and more important, to glimpse this same truth in regard to an unpopular cause the destiny of which is still undecided.

Even in the face of the bitter disillusionments of the last quarter of a century, including the betrayals of principles and peoples and the scrapping of countless obligations in the supposed interest of domestic and international realism, the Christian still dares to believe that peace, justice and righteousness, which stand or fall together, are actually capable of attainment in modern society, and that the validity of one's religion lies in one's ability to see this vision and live according to it. Well might any Christian covet the tribute which a critic of a later age paid to Roger Williams, an appealing but lonesome figure sent to earth before his time:

"He lived and dreamed in a future he was not to see, impatient to bring men to a heaven they were unready for. And because they were unready they could not understand the grounds of his hope, and not understanding they were puzzled and angry and cast him out to dream his dreams in the wilderness. . . . A humane and liberal spirit, he was groping for a social order more generous than any theocracy . . . bringing together the sundered societies of men in a common spirit of good will." *

Much is said and sung about the faith of our fathers, in retrospect and often in utter complacency; too little attention is given to the faith of our sons, faith which will start from foundations which we must make, lay or strengthen.

"Faith of our fathers, thou hast led
Prophetic souls before our time,
As they looked out beyond the years

* V. L. Parrington, *The Colonial Mind* (New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1927), I, 62-63.

And glimpsed a kingdom more sublime.
Faith in the future was such faith;
By it the past could laugh at death.

“Faith of the future, sure to grow
If each new age to truth is true,
May we perceive thee in our day,
And thus assure our sons their due.
Faith of the future, holy faith,
Believing thee we outlast death.”

Such faith of necessity breathes into Christianity a devoted willingness to sacrifice for a supreme cause. Men do not hesitate to risk their fortunes and lives for lesser and more popular objectives, as when troops march loyally off to war and potential death, amid cheering crowds with bands playing, flags flying, and half the population of a city shouting heart-felt farewells. It is more difficult, however, to face some other kinds of sacrifice alone or in opposition to the crowd, when fidelity to one's ideals may lead not to glory but to a prison, when a man becomes not one of a sublimated mass of crusaders but merely a very isolated and solitary pioneer facing social ostracism, economic insecurity, loss of personal freedom, concern for the suffering sure to be borne by dependents, and utter oblivion for himself in his own day and thereafter. But Christianity has given men of all epochs a power adequate for such trials; one of the chief evidences of the validity of Christianity is that it has proved perpetually able to direct souls to similar consecration.

The attainment of this vision in years to come is, however, no longer largely a matter involving merely an individual by himself; it is rather a goal which will be reached most adequately by entire social groups. For this is an age in which ideas, whether good or bad, are contagious, an age in which, thanks to new inventions and techniques, the thoughts and ac-

tions of one person soon produce wide repercussions. Crowds have thus been aroused toward certain objectives by dictators, or they have been inspired to better purpose by the quiet example of a Tolstoi or a Kagawa, or by the more graphic procedures of a Gandhi.

In like manner, if it were collectively to assert itself, the Christianity of today and of tomorrow could move forward and markedly influence the world, not through the employment of the raucous methods of propaganda which have become so characteristic of the present century, but through the manifestation of a unity of purpose and through reliance upon inherent truth. The burden of such responsibility rests to some extent today as always upon the individual, but to an even greater degree in the present era of mass action the heavier responsibility lies upon organized Christianity and therefore upon the church, Christianity's basic institution. In the future the church must continue to recognize and wrestle with certain issues the mastery of which may actually save mankind.

To begin with, the church of the mid-twentieth century like the church of the first three centuries may attain refinement through difficulty and persecution. This pressure consists of more than the financial embarrassment experienced by many local units which in boom days erected costly plants burdened by mortgages that now seem very oppressive and in the handling of which certain congregations through sacrifice and joint exertion sometimes reach a new grasp of spiritual realities. A generation ago the main obstacle to religious vitality was personal indifference. Nearly all respectable people in America and Europe then claimed a connection with Christianity, but few took the matter seriously. Now, however, a Christian has to fear foes outside himself, for he may meet trouble if he attempts to live like an original Christian, unfettered in thought and conduct.

Americans are willing enough to admit that Christians in

other lands are restricted by limitations both social and governmental. They are less able to realize that similar inhibitions may soon be placed upon themselves. Addressing a company of Methodists gathered in New York in 1937 to honor the silver jubilee of his election to the episcopacy, Bishop Francis J. McConnell pointed out that the religion of the United States twenty-five years earlier had been an optimistic, well fed, smiling, philanthropic philosophy, making the gospel mostly a mixture of milk and honey; that in the World War many earnest religious thinkers forswore the gospel outright, while many others violently set up a fascist god; and that now religious and social liberalism are on trial. "The next ten years," he said, "will probably see more deadly warfare against free speech than our nation has known within the lifetime of anyone who hears me." * Other thoughtful interpreters like Professor Walter Horton have expressed similar opinions. It will be the task and opportunity of the Christian church not merely to guarantee for itself and its people these fundamental civil liberties, but also to find in this experience new life for itself.

Many Occidentals witnessed just such a spiritual regeneration throughout Christianity in China during the difficult years between 1925 and 1928 when the church, perhaps quite unjustly, was regarded with suspicion because it was alleged to be connected with Western imperialism and because it was supposedly out of touch with contemporary Chinese needs. At that time many a Chinese pastor, teacher or layman through calm devotion and sacrifice in the face of ostracism and persecution gave full testimony to the validity of his faith. And for other reasons the Chinese Christians are suffering today. Incidentally, through these sad experiences Chinese Christianity has been purged of many irrelevant accretions, native and foreign, with the result that it has become a revitalized force

* *New York Times*, Oct. 26, 1937.

destined to exert wide influence throughout the globe. All of these are most encouraging signs.

In connection with its purification through suffering, Christianity may prove to be the most natural and potent factor for maintaining or reobtaining liberty in the face of the oppression of totalitarian states. In certain countries Christianity does not seem likely to exert much influence in the immediate future. The Soviet Union has discouraged, although not prohibited, the expression and inculcation of religion; Italy's dictator has tried to buy off the church by a bargain or two and has little to fear from the institutionalized religion of his empire; in the mikado's kingdom the Christian faith is as yet too new and too sparsely spread to be much of an influence, although a few Japanese Christians have proved to be significant critics of authoritarian government.

In Germany, however, large groups of both Catholics and Protestants have become the most vigorous and effective opponents of certain phases of dictatorship. Not all may agree with every political or religious conception of Pastor Martin Niemöller, but anyone who heard him preach his memorable sermon on "We must obey God rather than men" to a dense and earnest congregation in his Dahlem church on the last Sunday before his arrest in the summer of 1937,* will forever maintain that his fearless voice, longing for a new Gamaliel to teach tolerance and moderation to his people, sent forth a spirit and a truth to which the human heart instinctively responds, and reinforced a religious movement which will outlast incarceration or even death. The great Bismarck was actually the loser in the long conflict which he waged with merely one branch of the Christian church. There is reason to think that, if and when the nazi system eventually crumbles, it will pass away in large degree because it cannot permanently

* An English version of this sermon appears in Martin Niemöller, *Here Stand I!* (Chicago, Willett, Clark & Co., 1937).

prevail against free Christianity, to say nothing of that other strong and even more grievously offended faith, Judaism. For Christianity and autocracy do not consistently go together.

Dr. Frank Buchman has expressed the opinion that what the world needs is a God-governed dictatorship; others have suggested that if any dictator were actually to become a complete Christian he would have to abandon his authoritarian office, for he could not apply dictatorship and at the same time meet any real Christian test. In the future struggle between dictatorship and democracy, Christianity may prove the decisive element in evolving the peaceful triumph of the way of liberty and popular government. But during the process many a Christian may have both to dream and to suffer.

Hand in hand with a vindication of democracy and justice must go a mastery of the problem of war. The greatest task of Christianity during the present century will be presumably the elimination of unrestricted force employed by inflamed national states. On this point religion must speak out boldly. Great human appeal lies in the air journeys of a prime minister speeding to face-to-face interviews to heal a breach, and there is supreme drama in a general agreement to call a conference when a world war is only two hours away. But Christians need to go beyond such last-minute expedients which all too often sacrifice justice; they rather must discover and use more fundamental ways of assuring constructive, honorable and permanent peace. Had professing Christians really believed in and employed the machinery for peace — small armaments, collective security and international understanding — set forth in that great series of monumental agreements starting with the Covenant of the League of Nations and climaxing in the Kellogg-Briand Pact of Paris, humanity would now be actually at peace.

Causes of war could be further removed by applying to all international tensions such economic readjustments and gen-

eral commitments to stewardship and brotherhood as the constructive proposals which the Lytton Report of 1932 offered as a permanent solution for the Manchurian conflict. This epoch-making document, largely the work of a few high-minded men of definite Christian character, is a symbol of the way in which practical religion can advance justice and world unity.

The peace and understanding potentially inherent in Christianity are not confined to the international realm; they may and must likewise be applied domestically to guarantee that social justice for which such realistic idealists as Walter Rauschenbusch and Bishop Williams so valiantly strove. Public servants like Secretary Wallace insist that changed human hearts are a requisite for any enduring social transformation. Christianity does not pit class against class but seeks to eliminate classes in a common identity of interest which will prevent exploitation and assure a fuller life to every human being. In an age in which the spokesmen of both labor and capital in America seem divided among themselves and uncertain as to their exact program, Christianity should serve all parties by creatively demonstrating amid the distraught industrial scene the teachings of its Founder.

There is appropriate timeliness in the report of the commission sent by President Roosevelt in the summer of 1938 to study industrial relations in Sweden. These experts hold that this Baltic country's enviable position is traceable to "the settlement of differences by methods of persuasion rather than by force." Here is a practical call to the need of emphasizing cooperation as a great Christian fundamental which the Scandinavian people have tested and found workable. It may well transpire that through the application of cooperative techniques in industry, agriculture and other realms America may establish a better social order than the Western hemisphere has as yet produced.

In other directions, too, the future is full of promise if Chris-

tians will dare to seek the full possibilities of their faith. The followers of the Great Teacher may well stress their inheritance by making all their education honest, scientific and reverent, by encouraging ministers to teach as well as preach, by perfecting the teaching and administration of religious education in the Sunday schools, in the Christian Student Movement, and in the denominational foundations which increasingly cluster about state universities, and perhaps most of all by demonstrating the distinctive mission of denominational colleges and of independent Christian universities and colleges. "Ye shall know the truth," said the Master, "and the truth shall make you free." If taken seriously, this promise may actually be fulfilled.

Closely allied to education is the Christian function of inspirational group worship, centering in symbol, ritual, architecture, music and thoughtful meditation, and through the quiet suggestiveness of an interpretative voice directing the soul from altar or pulpit until it is indeed dissolved into ecstasies with all heaven brought before its eyes. In a new sense within recent years Protestantism has begun to appreciate the power of such aesthetic worship; therein lies a basis for hope that religion will continually manifest new power. At the height of one of America's most materialistic ages, an authoritative church historian closed a careful analytical survey with a significant statement: "Amid so much that is vague and doubtful in my own vision of the religion of tomorrow this stands out clearly for me: the religious society of tomorrow will have room for mystics."* That mystical element, combined with social vision, intelligent, disciplined education, and practical action gives modern Christianity a present effectiveness and a permanent sanction.

For many centuries the force of Christianity has been vitiated by division and strife. At last the tide has turned and

* Kirsopp Lake, *The Religion of Yesterday and Tomorrow* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1926), p. 179.

has commenced to flow full and strong toward cooperation and unity. The churches of countless communities combine in joint services and in movements for social betterment. They form ministerial unions and local and national councils of churches. Protestants, Catholics, and Jews unite in a common fellowship.

A definitive study like *Re-thinking Missions* advocates in missionary endeavor a unity of spirit and even of organization, and indicates the identity rather than the diversity of Christianity and other religions. Denominations blend together in organic union, like the Unitarians and Universalists, or the three chief branches of American Methodism, or the three diverse denominations which have formed the United Church of Canada, or the fresh and hopeful united Church of Christ in China. Representatives of nearly all the non-Roman branches of Christianity met at such gatherings as those at Lausanne and Stockholm and particularly at Oxford and Edinburgh in 1937. There appeared at the latter two conferences such a marked impulse toward ecumenical unity of spirit that not merely was a World Council of Churches established at the subsequent assembly at Utrecht, but the broken body of Christendom seems on the way toward a new type of healing unity capable also of assuring permanent freedom. If Christians will now cease to suspect one another and to battle against their brothers, but instead will move forward together in creative adventure, unitedly to face all moral wrong and confusion, then individual lives and society as a whole may actually show the effect of the transforming power of religion.

On Palm Sunday of 1938 there was a fire in Norwich Cathedral, one of the majestic English edifices which have dominated city and countryside ever since Norman days. The blaze was in the organ loft; flames, smoke, tumult and the water hose of firemen filled the structure. But when the fire had been extinguished and the excitement had died away, the walls, body and roof of the cathedral still rose unimpaired,

while outside, almost touching one of the stone foundations, stood calmly as through previous years the grave and simple monument of Edith Cavell, the nurse who spent most of her active life in quiet service in the country round about the cathedral, and who through her death in Belgium became suddenly the symbol of that rare spiritual conquest which transcended the acts and thought-forms of the World War. For on the eve of her execution by enemy soldiers, she discovered for herself and her contemporaries new potentialities when she said: "Standing as I do in view of God and eternity, I realize that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness toward anyone."

So now fire rages in China, and it threatens the world. Yet after the flames and smoke have passed away, the structure of civilization will still stand, pointing to the sky and representing all aspiration human and divine, while mankind may have learned the great lesson, "I must have no hatred or bitterness toward anyone." In that attainable day the Christian community will more visibly motivate and even save mankind.

THE HEART OF GOD

BY ALBERT EDWARD DAY

He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. JOHN 14:9

Science cannot prove the existence of God. But to those who believe in God, science discloses something of the amazing power of God. Nothing just happens in the universe. The blowing of the wind, the surge of the tide, the fall of the meteor, the "vivid, vindictive lightning's serpentine flash" — all are the expression of energy moving in obedience to discoverable patterns. Whence came the energy, who fixed the patterns? Our answer is, "God." What energy! What patterns! What a God!

When under the tutelage of physics and astronomy we explore the sky, we find ourselves everywhere in the presence of power so measureless as to take one's breath. Astronomers have estimated that there are two million star systems, each of them containing thousands of millions of stars. All of those inconceivable myriads of stars are on the go, racing one thousand times as fast as an express train, yet over areas so great that if you were to take your stand anywhere, you would have to wait a million million million years before a star would run over you. How astounding the power that moves and controls such bewildering masses over such bewildering distances!

And when in imagination we climb down out of the sky into the tiny atom, we find ourselves confronted by energies so incomprehensible that we fall on our knees and pray that science may not discover how to release those energies until religion has developed a race of men who will be humane enough not to use them for purposes of destruction. The might in a comparatively few atoms could bring night to Western civilization. The universe is full of energy, and the God of the universe must be a God of power.

Philosophy analyzes the universe presented by science and inquires what God's use of power indicates, what clue it gives us to the operation of his mind. Through the course of the centuries many answers have been given. The Greeks said that God is primarily an artist, that his chief concern is beauty; and they evolved an ethic from the idea of beauty as Ultimate Reality. The Romans said that God is first of all a sovereign, that he has a political mind, that the enactment and enforcement of law is his aeonic activity; and they too conceived an ethic as the result of their notion of God. Mr. Eddington declares that God is a great mathematician, that the very fact that the formulas of mathematics can be used to describe everything in the heavens above, the earth beneath and the waters under the earth seems to justify the conclusion that the Great Planner thinks mathematically and that his mind most naturally functions in terms of $y^2 = 4px$ or some other equation.

We attend eagerly to all that science tells us of the power of God and to all that philosophy offers us concerning the mind of God. But mere power brings us no assurance where we most need it, whether power is present in the human or the divine realm. Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon all had power once. Mussolini and Hitler have it today. They speak and it is done. They command and it stands fast. But the power of them all has been and is a menace to the world. In the long ago mothers clutched babes to their bosoms in fear, fathers apprehensively kissed their daughters good night, rulers trembled on their thrones, whenever it was rumored that these men of power were coming. And at this very hour statesmen in their chancelleries are growing gray and anxious as they contemplate the ascendancy of an ex-house-painter over the German mind and the hypnotic control of a Mussolini over the destinies of Italy. We are interested in power, for power of some sort is necessary if life is to go on. Someone must be able to command obedience, allegiance, loyalty, affection if

society is not to degenerate into chaos. Anarchy, a world without power, a world where no one commands and no one obeys, where there is no government but only the impulse of individuals, is a madman's dream. Power there must be.

Almost everybody admires a man who can talk. There is so much talk. Some people seem to think when they have made a talk or listened to a talk, something has really been done. True, something has happened — time and nerve energy have been expended on the part of both speakers and listeners. But nothing really has been *done*. In a world like this where talk is so often mistaken for action and orators are praised as doers, it is refreshing to meet a man of power, a man who does things.

But granting the social significance of power, when we have been told that a man has power we have not learned about him what is most important for the life of the world. Power can be perdition — too often is. Power is always peril, first of all to the possessor. Few can be trusted with it. Most are warped by it. There are reasons for the panic which the presence of power engenders and for the limitations with which men always attempt to surround power, whether political or economic or ecclesiastical. Absolute monarchy, unregulated capitalism, unlimited papacy, have all given ample demonstration that something besides power is needed to make a man what he ought to be and to make the world comfortable in his presence.

Nor do we find the assurance we crave about individuals when we are told merely about their minds. We want intelligence, of course — how we want it! If we could really have a brain trust in Washington, it would pay us to add another million or so to our already excessive tax rates in order to keep them there. In the end there would be less taxes and more service. If there were more convolutions inside the heads of both elements in the industrial struggle, there would be less threat of revolution and more assurance of the peaceful

evolution of economic justice. If there were more gray matter in ecclesiastical councils, there would be fewer broken hearts in the pulpits.

But something besides intellect is needed in human affairs. Aaron Burr made one of the most brilliant scholastic records at Princeton, but we could not build a nation out of Aaron Burrs. Nor can we build friendships and homes and industries and even schools out of brains alone. When a man stands at your heart's door knocking for admission, you do not, if you are wise, ask merely about his I.Q., but about his ideals, his sentiments, his dreams. What does he love? Did he ever love anybody but himself? Has he any capacity for admiration, for loyalty, for sacrifice? In a word, what of his heart? Power without principle, intellect without ideals are no recommendation to confidence, no assurance of happiness or peace. A man is capable? All right, but what kind of conscience has he? He has a great mind? Splendid, but what does he mean to do with it?

So about God, I am not impressed with mere talk about his power. One of the stories connected with Christmas is the story of the virgin birth. I would never argue about that with anybody; I have my own opinion about it. But I would never take it into the arena of debate. Let the story stand as it is. Granted that God could and would turn aside from the natural to some supernatural miracle of birth, that does not tell me about God what I most want to know. That would be a display of power. But what I am concerned about is not a display of power, but evidences of a purpose that I can trust. Suppose that God did bestow on a virgin the boon of motherhood, what about other uses of his power he is likely to make? Some people say, "God can do everything." All right, but what does he will to do? That is what I need to know, and the answer to that lies in the heart of God. I have heard men of long ago pray, "O Lord, Thy mighty arm make bare."

I would rather pray, "O Lord, uncover Thy heart." A mighty arm would be a spectacle of terror unless it were controlled by a heart that cares.

Some praise the wisdom of God. Omniscience has been one of the favorite terms by which theology has described him. Some of the hottest controversies have raged about how much even a God can know. One is glad for every evidence of a wisdom greater than man's. It is good to think that Someone knows what it is all about. We do not. Astronomy may count and weigh the stars, but it cannot tell us why they came into being. Psychology and sociology may indicate some individual tendencies and reveal some social trends; but no one, unless it be God, knows what you will be doing a year from now or what is going to become of the civilization which a few short years ago we thought was on the way to a millennium of peace and splendor. We hope God knows — knows well what we grasp only feebly; knows what we cannot know; knows what the enemies of the race, both human and cosmic, are likely to do; knows how like some great chess player to make the next move and finally win the game. But if he does know, will he make the move? Again, the answer lies in his heart.

What about that heart? Dreadful stories have been told about it by priests and preachers and theologians. They have said that it was a heart which was at war with man and could be appeased only by the slaying of youth and the offering of that slain beauty and strength upon some altar of sacrifice; that it could let children miss the beatific vision or suffer in hell forever because their parents had neglected to have them baptized; that it could create millions of human beings, and after selecting a few of them to be the subject of redeeming grace, could relinquish the rest to the flames of eternal torment without any compunction or without any diminution of its own happiness; that it was so insistent that men should

believe an established creed as to sanction the persecution and execution of those whose heresy was a heresy of the mind rather than of the moral will; that it was greatly exercised over liturgies and could be quite as much angered by the incorrect hanging of an altar cloth or the improper intonation of an "amen" as by some moral turpitude.

I have a friend, a big, breezy, human person, who knows that things should be done decently and in order but is quite incapable of liturgical exactitude or of interest in it. He went to preach once for a high-churchman who had many altars and gowns and responses and a completely diagramed service. My friend was eager to fit into the service as well as he could, for he was first of all a gentleman; so he listened carefully to instructions and when he entered the chancel took the position assigned him as nearly as he could. But he felt some uneasiness and after his entrance whispered to the officiant, "Am I about right?" "No," whispered the pastor in charge, "move about six inches to the left." My friend told me about it with a chuckle. He just could not believe that six inches to the left or six inches to the right made much difference with God. But some people seem to think it does. The picture they have of the heart of God is of one who can scarcely sleep on Saturday night for fear some clergyman or worshiper will not assume the right position or pronounce the right accent on Sunday morning.

Think of all the libels uttered against the heart of God when men have discussed and proclaimed doctrines of the atonement in such fashion as to persuade the hearer that God could not forgive unless bribed or persuaded by immense suffering on the part of someone. There are reasons in the heart of man for a real doctrine of atonement, reasons that lie deep in his own sense of guilt and in the moral chasm created between him and God by his sin; but it is little less than a caricature of the Eternal Heart to assume that only suffering moves that heart to tenderness and evokes within it a readiness to pardon.

Oh heart of God, what lies
Have been whispered in the ears of men
By those who claim to know Thee,
What lies of tongue and pen!
Libeled at Thine own altars,
Defamed by foolish word,
Where shall we go to learn of Thee,
Where may the truth be heard?

The Christian faith has an answer to that poignant, bewildered cry. It takes us across the seas and across the centuries to a manger and says, "There sleeping in Mary's arms is the heart of God. Watch that boy become a man. Follow him about, listen to his words, take the measure of his deeds. His life is a revelation not only of the heart of a carpenter's son, but of the heart that is at the center of the universe."

How dare we entertain such a faith? Many profound philosophies and theologies have been woven into intricate patterns in an effort to provide an answer to that question. I want to leave with you the simplest and what is perhaps the most convincing answer of all to the modern mind; of all men who ever lived Jesus was most aware of God, and it is always the one who is most aware of things or persons who knows most about them. A visitor stands in an art gallery before a painting of the setting sun, stands there amazed, incredulous. "Why, I never saw all that in the sunset." His guide replies, "Don't you wish you could?" The painter was aware and he knew. His eyes, sensitive to line and color, discovered many things to which others were blind. The tourist spectator felt that the canvas did not tell the truth, that it exaggerated, that it imparted into the closing hour of day something not really there. But the painter had not exaggerated or fabricated. He merely reported what less sensitive eyes could not observe.

Scientists are telling us today about cosmic rays, the most concentrated form of energy known to science. They be-

lieve that the cosmic rays may account for the fact that in the garden from time to time a new type of flower will suddenly appear. Sports they are called, rare and eagerly watched-for. From them by skillful horticulture may be developed new varieties of bloom to enrich the garden scene. One scientist suggestively says, "Much of the glory of modern gardens may have its origin in radiation which was emitted before the earth existed, and which has been traveling on through space until at last it ends in curling the petals of the sweet pea or introducing a new blue into the delphinium." Did you ever see a cosmic ray, or feel one, or otherwise prove its existence? No? Well, the scientist says there is one. Who knows? The scientist, of course, because of his greater awareness developed by scientific disciplines, implemented by delicate instruments, intensified by elaborate formulas.

You have a friend whom you think wonderful. Others pass him by with scarcely a nod. Who knows the truth about that man? You or the careless vagabond of the city streets? You do, of course, and don't you let anybody tell you you do not! You are sensitive to his inner grandeur. You know. It is always the man who is most aware, who has either won or been gifted with awareness, who knows most about anything.

Of all the men who ever lived, Jesus was the most aware of God. Every faithful student of history knows that. Theologians call it his consciousness of God. It is so evident in what he said and did. He lived as if God were always within reach. His relationship to God was the intimate relationship of a Son. He spoke as if he had not a guess or logical inference but a sure word from God. He met every situation as if God were right there to help him when he needed it and as much as he needed it. That is a phenomenon so impressive that it is not necessary to argue it. It has often been obscured by theological debate and speculation, but when men stop trying to prove or disprove some metaphysical assertion about Jesus long enough to look at him as he was, they are compelled to

recognize that here was One who lived among us and yet who lived with God. He spoke our language, yet that language had no uncertainty in it. It was the language of one to whom God was as real as the lilies of the field, or the fowls of the air, or the children playing on a doorstep, or neighbors celebrating a wedding.

Jesus was aware of God intimately, intensely, universally. Because he was aware, he knew. I should no more give countenance to a contradiction of him coming from one who was not aware of God than listen to a criticism of a canvas from one who had no artistic feeling, or to a contradiction of science by one who had never developed scientific sensitivity of perception, or to the calumny of a friend by one who never even sat on the threshold of his life. The most conspicuous thing about Jesus was not his ethical precepts — they were not wholly new — but his awareness of God.

And Jesus lived in harmony with that awareness. That is vastly significant. Had he disobeyed it, had he repudiated in his own life what he had discovered in the life of God, not only would his life have given the lie to his insights but he would soon have blurred and ultimately lost those insights. This spiritual nature of ours is so sensitive that if its vision be disobeyed, the capacity for vision is destroyed. Jesus obeyed. He seems always to have lived in harmony with his perception of the character and will of God. Trace his words to their last meaning, observe all his moods, watch his reactions; nowhere is there a sign of that feeling of which we are all too poignantly conscious, the feeling that we have been disloyal to the best, disobedient to some heavenly vision. Wherever we see Jesus, he seems to be following the gleam. He is tempted, he is baffled, he is hurt, he is finally killed, but his face is always forward and he acts like a man who knows he has not failed. Therefore we can trust his last word as well as his first. From beginning to end he knows God and loves God as none other has ever loved him. The heart of God is

reflected in Jesus' heart and expressed in Jesus' life. What Jesus was, God was and is and will be forever.

“In Christ I feel the heart of God
Throbbing from heaven through earth;
Life stirs again within the clod,
Renewed in beauteous birth;
The soul springs up, a flower of prayer,
Breathing his breath out on the air.”*

What does Jesus tell us of the heart of God? One thing, one tremendous thing, one thing which the worldly mind finds it hard to comprehend, one thing which many Christians have not yet believed, one thing which theologians have obscured or cast aside altogether. I am half-afraid to utter it to you, not because I am afraid of you but because I am afraid you will close your mind against it. But if all that I have said, which is but a faint reflection of the great Christian faith, be true about Jesus, then the heart of God is a Father-heart. Jesus who knew most about God said that over and over again. When ye pray, say “Our Father.” Other men have called God, Father — in the ancient religions of Greece and India. In the Old Testament the word had been used, but never with such meaning. To all others God was Father only in a procreative sense, as the origin of life; in an official sense, as one of his titles; in an authoritative sense, as of one who rules his household. But Jesus said that God is Father in the real sense and in the best sense; that he cares for every one of us; that, while he lets us learn by our own mistakes as every wise father does, he forgives readily upon repentance without having to be bribed into it, and forgives completely, as every good father does; that his discipline is not punitive, vengeful, retaliatory, but corrective only; that we can go to him about everything and trust him with everything. The fatherhood

* Lucy Larcom, “Our Christ.”

Jesus declared he found in God was not some pompous, artificial abstraction but a real fatherhood.

It is difficult to think of any truth which would revolutionize life and religion more than would the acceptance of this. It has its difficulties, to be sure. I sat in a home the other day where pain is ravaging a woman's body. She is not afraid of death but she is finding her agony unendurable. She prays only that the devastating cruelty of it may cease. But there is no abatement, and she wonders why a Father would let his child suffer so. It is the old, old problem of evil and as yet has no final answer. But you may take the word of more than one who has seriously pondered this problem; we come much nearer an answer when we think of it in the light of divine fatherhood than in any other way. If God is not a monster torturing us, or a cold absolute ignoring us, or a self-absorbed sovereign indifferent to us, but our Father, then he suffers with us and will do his best to help us. We have both a present comfort and a future hope.

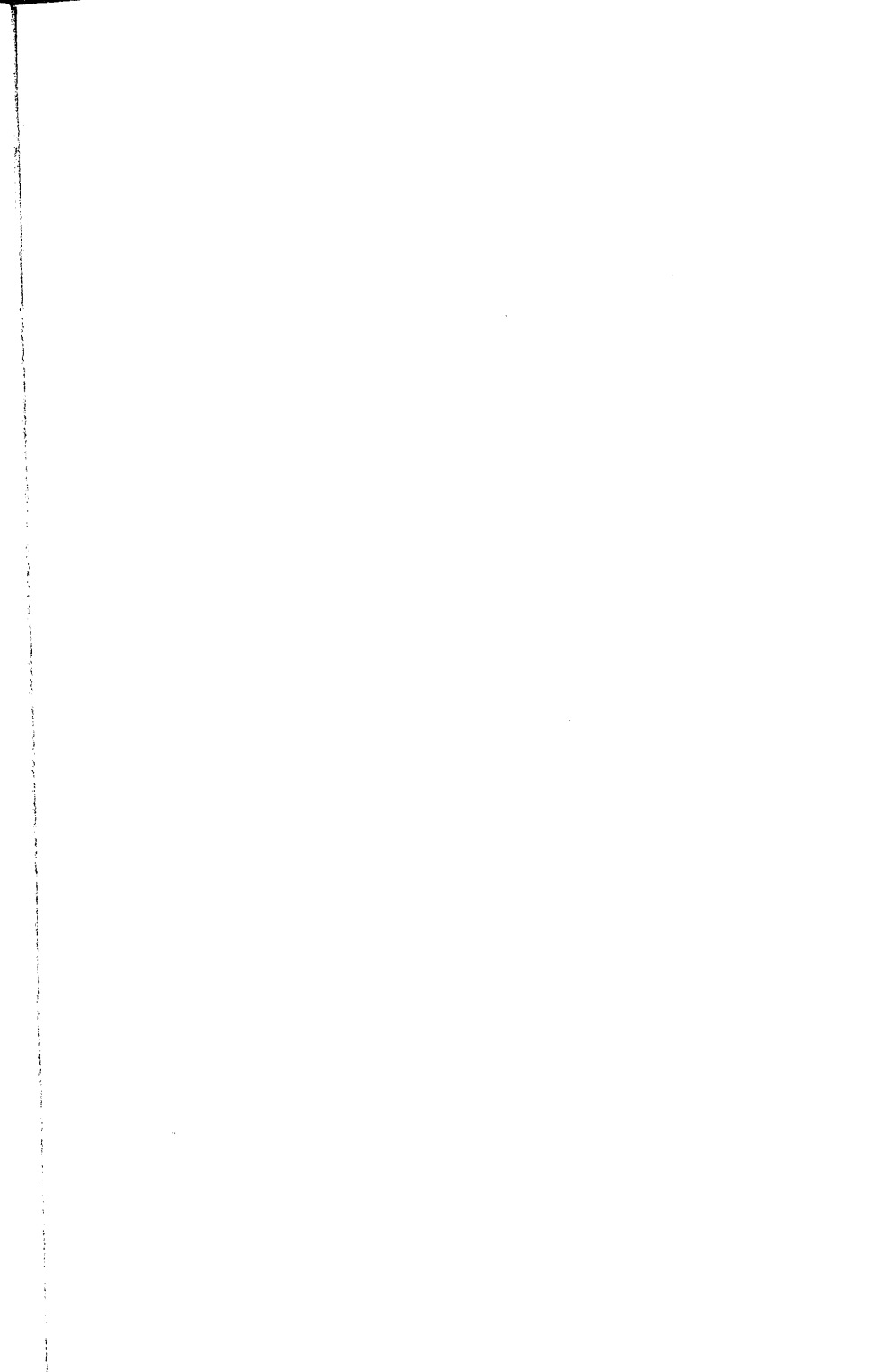
If God be our Father, no human torture can be anything but torture to him. No babe will be damned for the failure of its parents, no individual will be ultimately penalized for the sins of society, no soul will be created and left to perish. If God be our Father, then there is nothing to do about sin but to repent and start all over again. No penance, no flagellation, no hounding of oneself with remorse, but a contrition and a new beginning! Whatever yesterday was, today may be a new day; yesterday, forgiven, is forgotten by him and may be forgotten by us.

The other day a man sat in my presence who had failed tragically and whose failure had brought a dark shadow not only into his own life but into the lives of those who loved and trusted him. He found himself at last in the penitentiary wearing the stripes of society's condemnation, ashamed, humiliated, in despair. But we had kept in touch with him, told him of God's forgiving love and redeeming power. At last

he had risen out of his gloom, had turned his back upon his dark yesterday and his face toward God. The sentence came to an end. He was again a free man in a world where before he had been a slave. Already he was finding his way into a new life. Hope was burning brightly on the altar of his soul. Faith was making clear the path before him. And he came to thank me and the church for having revealed to him the heart of God and having taught him that in the Father's heart there is forgiveness and a chance of new beginnings.

If God is our Father, then prayer is not a begging but a thanksgiving, an unburdening of the heart, a fellowship. If God is our Father, then we all are brethren, and he cannot countenance unbrotherliness on the part of any of us. He is interested in all others as well as in ourselves. We cannot be on good terms with him and be indifferent to the foes which assail the personality of multitudes. We dare not sit with folded hands while profits or poverty, economy or monopoly make war on personality. The fatherhood of God demands a true brotherhood among men, and the fatherhood of God cannot be fully understood nor richly enjoyed by those who repudiate the claims of brotherhood in any of the relationships of life.

If God is our Father, then we can dismiss our fears. The future may hold hard things for us but it will hold him too, and he will never cease until he has brought us to victory and peace. Life is worth the living, the struggle is worth making, for there will be an outcome. This universe is not a vast graveyard where God is the chief undertaker. It is our Father's house. It is his home and ours, and in it we shall live and work forever.



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